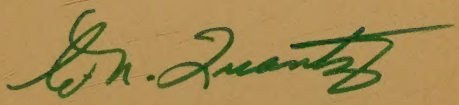

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

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The Gospel of John

A Handbook for Christian Leaders

BY

BENJAMIN W. ROBINSON

PROFESSOR OF NEW TESTAMENT INTERPRETATION
CHICAGO THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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PREFACE

Intensive and prolonged study has been applied to the Gospel of John since the appearance of Westcott's commentary over forty years ago, as well as to the general early Christian history of which it was a part. The results of this study are distributed through many volumes dealing with many separate phases of the subject. But no single comprehensive, critical commentary embodying these results has appeared either in England or America in all these years. The aim of the following pages is to give, under successive chapter and verse headings, illustrations of how this recent scholarly work is calculated to accentuate the marvelously vital and far-reaching popular power of this Gospel.

Every Christian leader in these days should study to present his religion in a modern and forceful manner. The humanizing of knowledge, says James Harvey Robinson, "is the supreme problem of our age" (Humanizing of Knowledge, p. 74). It is the purpose of this volume to aid in this task. To that end technical discussions are avoided as far as possible.

There are scholars who "always write more or less unconsciously for one another." "The specter haunts them, not of a puzzled and frustrated reader, but of a tart reviewer, likely to accuse them of superficiality or inaccuracy" (p. 101). "What a considerable and beneficent revolution would take place in teaching and writing if a teacher should" in writing a practical handbook "confine himself . . . to telling only such facts as play so important a part in his own everyday thinking that he could recall them without looking them up" (p. 106).

An extreme example of following this ideal may be found in the discussion of the Prologue of John in this volume, for the words "probably" and "uncertain" are largely avoided and "hypostatization" is noticeable by its absence.

In reproducing sections of the text of the Gospel only as much is incorporated as is necessary for convenience in understanding the comments. In making the translation used I have felt free to adopt any suggestions which came to me from previous translations, the Twentieth Century New Testament, Goodspeed's New Testament and others. For supplementing the fragmentary sections of the text printed in this volume the reader will do well to keep one of these translations, preferably Goodspeed's, at his elbow.

References to modern literature are usually given by author only. A list of titles will be found in the Bibliography at the close of the volume.

My indebtedness to others will be apparent on every page. To Professor Adolf Deissmann I owe much, not only on the subject of authorship, but on many other topics. To my friend Professor Ernst T. Krueger for helpful criticism of the manuscript, to my colleague Dr. Harold R. Willoughby for many suggestions, to my wife for tireless assistance with manuscript and index, to The Macmillan Company for efficient editorial co-operation, I desire to express here again my appreciation and thanks.

BENJAMIN WILLARD ROBINSON.

Chicago Theological Seminary,
March 1, 1925.

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THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

CHAPTER I

THE AUTHOR OF THE GOSPEL

John xxi, 20. Peter turning around sees the disciple whom Jesus loved following, the one who leaned back on his breast at the supper and said, Master, who is it that is going to betray you? 21. Peter seeing him says to Jesus, Master, what about this man? 22. Jesus says to him, If I wish him to tarry till I come, what is that to you? You are to follow me. 23. So the saying went forth among the brethren that that disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die; but said, If I wish him to tarry till I come, what is that to you?

24. This is the disciple who bears witness to these things and wrote these things.

And we know that his testimony is true.

1. Tradition ascribes the Fourth Gospel to the Apostle John. The only statement in the Gospel itself which has a direct bearing upon the authorship is found in xxi, 24. "This is the disciple who . . . wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true." Evidently this statement is the note of one who declares not only that he knows who the author was, but knows also that the author's testimony is trustworthy. We cannot tell whether the "we" is editorial, indicating one person, or whether several persons vouch for the trustworthiness of the author.

Further study of chapter xxi makes it clear that the

chapter is an appendix added to the main body of the Gospel. The last verses of chapter xx are in form a conclusion. "Many other signs Jesus showed which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name." One purpose sought to be accomplished by adding chapter xxi is easily apparent. It stands out prominently. There was current among Christians at the time the Gospel was written a belief that Jesus had promised the disciple whom he loved (20) that he "would not die" (23). The author of the appendix admits that Jesus said something which might have been so understood, but denies that Jesus made this promise. "Jesus did not say that he would not die; but, If I wish him to tarry till I come, what is that to you?"

The circumstances that led to the writing of such an explanation are not hard to imagine. "The disciple whom Jesus loved" had now lived on so many years that he had become the sole living witness who could say that he had personally known Jesus. The fact that he had grown so old had caused the report to spread that Jesus had promised him that he would live till the inauguration of the Messianic kingdom at the Second Coming (Note esp. Luk. ix, 27). Finally, however, the veteran leader had died. His death caused some to lose faith in Jesus' promises, and gave to others a pretext for criticism of the Christian religion. An explanation was necessary and imperative. The passage in chapter xxi is that explanation.

Three facts are thus suggested as a working basis for further study. First, that the author is identified by xxi, 24, with "the disciple whom Jesus loved." Second, that this disciple had continued his Christian labors among his people to an advanced old age. Third, this Gospel was published in its completed form, like Virgil's Aeneid, after the death of its veteran author.

2. Until recent years John, the Apostle, the son of Zebedee, was widely supposed to be this disciple. But this

is nowhere stated either in the New Testament or in any other Christian writing of New Testament times. Support for such an opinion has been found in Irenaeus near the end of the second century. It now seems doubtful, nevertheless, whether even Irenaeus held this opinion.[1]

In the third century and later, however, it came to be assumed by Eusebius and others that the disciple "whom Jesus loved" must be one of the three favored Apostles, Peter, James, or John. John xxi, 7, pictures the loved disciple in conversation with Peter. Therefore Peter could not have been the one. Acts xii, 2, narrates the early death of James. Therefore James could not have been the veteran who was expected never to die. This process of elimination made it possible for Church fathers to argue that the aged disciple who wrote these things was John, the son of Zebedee. Westcott follows the same line of argument. The title of the Gospel, "According to John," which may date back to the second century, seemed to corroborate this conclusion, although there are many Johns mentioned both in the New Testament and in other early Christian writings. The earliest known reference to this Gospel as the Gospel of "John" is found in Theophilus of Antioch (181 A.D.).

In recent years much refractory evidence has come to light which makes it difficult to hold that the son of Zebedee was the one who reached an advanced old age and became the author of this Gospel. Papias writing about 140 A.D. records that the Apostle John suffered a martyr's death at the hands of the Jews. The Jews ceased to be a state before the year 70. Furthermore, the way in which Papias speaks in the same sentence of the martyrdom of James and John implies that John was killed early, like James (Acts xii, 2). John was alive in the year 48 (Gal. ii, 9).

Formerly, the only authority for this statement of Papias was a quotation by George Hamartolos, which was long regarded as not sufficiently authenticated. But the dis-

[1] Garvie, p. 252; Burney, pp. 138-142.

covery of the De Boor fragment, first published in 1888, as Moffat says, "removes all doubts" that "Papias really wrote something to this effect."[2] That Papias spoke of the martyrdom of the Apostle John along with that of James is an established conclusion of modern research.

Jesus prophesied that James and John would both like himself drink the cup of martyrdom (Mar. x, 39). This prophecy would not naturally have been recorded so prominently in Mark and Matthew if John was already approaching old age at the time. "The cup that I drink you shall drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized shall you be baptized" (Contrast John xxi, 22).

Furthermore, in the lists of martyrs in the Syriac calendar the note for December 27th reads "John and James, the apostles in Jerusalem," just as the martyrdom of Stephen is noted on December 26th, and of Paul and Peter on December 28th. The mention of "Jerusalem" indicates the martyrdom occurred before 70 A.D. for Jerusalem was then destroyed.

Aphrahat writing about 344 adds his bit to the evidence. He writes: "Great and excellent is the martyrdom of Jesus . . . and after him was the faithful martyr Stephen. . . . Simon also and Paul were perfect martyrs. And James and John walked in the footsteps of Christ their master." In the list of those who escaped martyrdom, given by Herakleon, the early Gnostic commentator quoted by Clement of Alexandria, are named Matthew, Philip, Thomas, Levi, but no John. Further items of evidence on this point may be found in the works of Schwartz, Bacon and Moffatt.

Aside from the evidence for the martyr death of the Apostle John there are other reasons for doubting that the Gospel was written by the son of Zebedee. The Gospel is written in Greek, while the son of Zebedee was an Aramaic speaking fisherman of Galilee. Not only is the language a pure and simple Greek, showing very little Semitic influ-

[2] Moffat, *Literature of the New Testament*, p. 604.

ence, but its ideas and presuppositions are distinctly Hellenistic.

Moreover, the son of Zebedee does not fit the part played by the Beloved Disciple. There are several passages in the synoptic gospels throwing light on the character of the son of Zebedee. In Mark x he is described as demanding along with James one of the chief seats in the kingdom. In another passage (Mar. iii, 17) James and John are surnamed "sons of thunder." In a third passage (Luk. ix, 51-56), telling how Jesus in going through Samaria encountered a hostile attitude on the part of native villagers, James and John said, "Master, do you wish that we bid fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" Mark ix, 38, is similar in tone.

These narratives portray John, the son of Zebedee, as a very different man from the "beloved disciple" of the Fourth Gospel who leaned on Jesus' breast at the supper.

The reasons for holding that the author was not the son of Zebedee are thus at least five in number. (*a*) The Gospel makes no claim to have been written by the Apostle. Even the appendix does not state that the author was the Apostle John or son of Zebedee. (*b*) Outside the Gospel there is no hint of such authorship until the third century. (*c*) A large amount of historical evidence now indicates the early martyr death of John, the son of Zebedee. (*d*) The Gospel is Greek in language and thought. (*e*) The character of the son of Zebedee does not harmonize with the Johannine picture of the "beloved disciple."

3. Continued search after the author thus leads inevitably to a more detailed study of the question: Who was the Beloved Disciple? There are three passages which mention this "disciple whom Jesus loved." In the third of these passages (xx, 2) the word "loved" is a different word in Greek, but the form used is the same noticeable imperfect tense and undoubtedly denotes the same disciple. The mention in the appendix (John xxi) already discussed is not included in the three passages. These passages con-

tain all the data known directly concerning the Beloved Disciple.

His first appearance is in xiii, 23. It is the scene of the last supper. Jesus has conversed with the disciples, has girded himself and washed their feet and has spoken the word, "One of you will betray me." Verse 23 then states: "There was at the table." It is a phrase possibly indicating that the one about to be described has not yet been mentioned. The exact order and flavor of the Greek words are hard to reproduce in English. But it is a form of expression which would be quite lacking in force if the one of the twelve it served to introduce was generally known as the Beloved Disciple. In that case instead of "There was reclining at the table one of his disciples, on Jesus' bosom" we would expect some such words as, "Now that disciple whom Jesus loved was reclining on his bosom."

It is to be noted that John does not say that there were just twelve at the supper (contrast vi, 67; xx, 24). Mark says, "He comes with the twelve" (Mar. xiv, 17), but when Jesus says "One of you shall betray me," Jesus adds, "It is one of the twelve" (Mar. xiv, 20) as though some one outside the Twelve might be present. Jesus, of course, had many disciples outside the number of the Twelve. The picture drawn in John's verses is of one outside the number. Such a one could more appropriately ask the question, "Lord, who is it?"

Moreover, it is rather difficult to imagine Jesus eating the last supper in a private home without the presence of the host or of some one representing the household. Furthermore, some young man of Jerusalem for whom Jesus had conceived a particular affection might very well be the one who reclined at Jesus' right at table and is pictured as "leaning back as he was on Jesus' breast." This would relieve the embarrassment of ascribing to Jesus such an exhibition of affectionate partiality toward one of the Twelve.

Bacon holds that the disciple thus described is an ideal

figure who represents better understanding of Jesus than that of any of the Twelve, a type of the Christian who through mystic communion comes close to the heart of Jesus.[3] The form of the statement, "There was at the table," and the situation as described, seem to point to one of these two alternatives, either to Bacon's that the Beloved Disciple is a purely imaginary figure, or else to the view that he was one of the real disciples but not of the Twelve. Moffatt, Burkitt, Bousset, Deissmann, Gardner, Garvie, Burney, Stanton, Jackson, and most others agree that the Beloved Disciple was a real person, either the son of Zebedee or a Jerusalem disciple. No other Christian character in this Gospel can be shown to be imaginary. To Moffatt the chief objection against his being an "imaginary" figure is "the psychological difficulty of conceiving how an abstract figure could be put side by side with the other disciples" (p. 567).

The other and simpler theory that the Beloved Disciple was a youth living in Jerusalem who became Jesus' disciple in the last days, and was loved by him with a fatherly affection, "has considerable plausibility."[4] Such a disciple might well be a Greek or Hellenist who could later write a gospel in Greek. John has informed us that there were "Greeks" "at the feast" who came and said, "We would see Jesus" (xii, 20-21). The Beloved Disciple must have been such a young man as could outlive all other personal disciples of Jesus in order to fit the description given in the appendix of the Gospel (xxi, 20-24). That would also make possible the dating of the Gospel near the end of the first century, a date which seems to be demanded by the point of view and general character of the book.

The second appearance of the Beloved Disciple is in xix, 26, in the scene at the cross. "When Jesus sees his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing by, he says to

[3] Bacon, *Fourth Gospel*, pp. 301-331.
[4] Moffatt, p. 567.

his mother, There is your son! Then he says to the the disciple, There is your mother! And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home." If the Beloved Disciple were a Galilean, he could hardly have taken the mother from Jerusalem to his home in that same "hour." If the passage is to be taken literally at all it is further evidence that the disciple to whom Jesus entrusts his mother who is without a home of her own in Jerusalem is one who does have a home there.

The third and only other appearance of the Beloved Disciple is in chapter xx. Peter and the "disciple whom Jesus loved" were on their way to the empty tomb. "And they both ran together: and the other disciple outran Peter and came first to the tomb." It is the picture of a youth going as a companion with Peter to the tomb, who breaks into a run, and then as Peter also starts to run, outstrips Peter and comes first to the tomb. "Yet he did not enter in," again suggests a youth who though arriving first defers to Peter and allows him to enter first.

4. Could a disciple outside the company of the Twelve be known as "the Beloved Disciple"? The word "beloved" is, of course, a later word. The phrase of the Gospel is always "the disciple whom Jesus loved." What is the exact meaning of the verb "loved"? Investigation of the usage of the word soon reveals the fact that the same verb is used regarding some disciples not included among the Twelve. In fact, a somewhat different verb is used regarding the Twelve. In xiii, 1, John says that Jesus "loved" his own unto the end. The reference is probably to Jesus' devotion to his circle of twelve disciples. In this passage the word "loved" is the aorist tense and is not the same form used later in the same chapter in the expression "the disciple whom Jesus loved." In the latter phrase the form used is the imperfect tense.

A parallel to this peculiar use of the imperfect tense may be found in xi, 5, in the story of Jesus' visit at the home of Lazarus. "Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sis-

ter and Lazarus." The word used to express Jesus' relation to Martha and Mary and Lazarus is precisely the same word in form and tense and spelling as the word used to express Jesus' relation to the disciple in question. The meaning was in all probability the same.

Whatever we understand the phrase "the disciple whom Jesus loved" to mean must be understood of the words expressing Jesus' love for Lazarus and his family. In both cases it was not the love that conferred precedence and preference and authority but that form of affectionate regard manifested in occasional and repeated visits—a domestic rather than an official partiality. Certainly there can be no valid objection to the view that the disciple whom Jesus loved in this sense might easily have been one who was not a member of the Twelve.

Long years afterward the usage became a popular one and we may imagine the pleasure with which various groups of Christians might call their local veteran leader "the disciple whom Jesus loved." The word "the" signified that there was no other survivor present in a community "whom Jesus loved." All the others whom Jesus had loved had passed on or were living elsewhere.

Turning once more to the appendix we notice that the disciple whom Jesus loved (xxi, 7) is one of a company composed of Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, the sons of Zebedee, "and two other" of his disciples (xxi, 2). The older assumption used to be that the Beloved Disciple would be of the inner circle and that he could not be Thomas, nor Nathanael, nor one of the two unnamed "disciples," but must be one of the sons of Zebedee. But now, on the contrary, it seems altogether natural to regard him as one of the two "disciples." In fact the use of the same word "disciple" repeated in verse 7 from verse 2 would seem to be additional indication that he was one of these two disciples rather than a son of Zebedee.

5. Is there any early Christian leader outside the circle of the Twelve who is known by name and who may be

identified as this disciple whom Jesus loved? That question naturally resolves itself into two others. Where was this Gospel written? Was there living in that place any outstanding figure who had been a personal disciple of Jesus?

That the Fourth Gospel was written in Ephesus is attested both by external tradition and by the internal evidence. Moffatt's statement is as follows: "The Ephesian locus of the Fourth Gospel in its present form is indicated, not only by the external evidence of tradition, but by converging lines of internal evidence, *e.g.*, the fact that it springs from the same circle or school as the apocalypse (itself an undoubtedly Asiatic document), the presence of the Ephesian Logos ideas, and of the controversy with the Baptist's followers" (p. 618).

Was there living in Ephesus any leader who had been a personal disciple of Jesus? At once the historian answers that in Ephesus there was a disciple of Jesus named John, known as "the veteran" preacher because of his advancing years. Papias' words (140 A.D.) are very clear. He says that there were two Johns, both disciples of the Lord; that the Galilean Apostle was one and the other was the "veteran" or "presbyter" John. In the days of Eusebius the tomb of John was still to be seen at Ephesus.[5]

Papias' words are as follows: "If then any one came who had been a follower of the elders, I questioned him in regard to the words of the elders—what Andrew or what Peter said, or what was said by Philip, or by Thomas, or by James, or by John, or by Matthew, or by any other of the disciples of the Lord, and what things Aristion and the presbyter (elder) John, the disciples of the Lord, say."[6]

Papias applies the word "disciple" to the second John exactly the same as in the case of the first John. But he uses the past tense "said" of the Apostle John, indicating that he had died before Papias' day (Papias was born a

[5] *Ch. Hist. III*, 39:6.
[6] Eus. *Ch. Hist. III*, 39:4.

little after 70); whereas he uses the present tense, "say," of the presbyter John, thus indicating that in Papias' youth this disciple was probably still living.

Irenaeus also writes that Papias "was a hearer of John," and means that he was a hearer of a John who had heard Jesus.[7] After referring to this statement of Irenaeus, Eusebius proceeds to show at great length that the John whom Papias heard was not the Apostle John but the other John (III 39:1-7).

Abbott[8] cited by Moffatt (p. 600) does not question that the phrase "disciple of the Lord" in the quotation from Papias must mean one who had been with Jesus personally. However, he sees a chronological obstacle to supposing that a disciple who had been with Jesus was alive in Papias' day and concludes there must be an error in the text. But this chronological difficulty is overcome if we agree that the disciple was a mere youth when Jesus died and that Papias knows him only in his old age as the elder or veteran.

This veteran John of Ephesus is undoubtedly the John with whom Polycarp says that he had talked and who had "seen the Lord."[9] Polycarp was martyred in 155 at the age of eighty-five and so he must have been born about the year 70 A.D. John the Apostle was martyred before that date in all probability. Three passages in Eusebius tend to support the position that Polycarp knew a John who had seen Jesus. In III, 36:1, Eusebius states that Polycarp was entrusted with the episcopate of the church at Smyrna by those "who had seen and heard the Lord."

Again in IV, 14:3, Eusebius says among the instructors of Polycarp were ones "who had seen Christ." Again in V, 20:6, in the statement that Irenaeus had heard Polycarp say he had talked with those who had "seen the Lord,"

[7] Eus. *Ch. Hist. III*, 39:1.
[8] *Enc. Bibl.* 1815.
[9] Eus. *Ch. Hist. V*, 20:6.

John is the only one of these latter mentioned by name. It is significant that Irenaeus does not ascribe to Polycarp a statement that he had heard the Apostle John, but that he had heard a John who had seen Jesus.

Since the early death of John the Apostle can now be regarded as well established, there can be little or no doubt that these statements of Papias, and Polycarp, and Irenaeus, and Eusebius indicate that there lived at Ephesus a Christian preacher and leader known as the presbyter John, who had been a disciple of Jesus. He fits into the framework of all the facts discovered in the search for the author of the Gospel. He may have fled to Ephesus at the time of the approaching destruction of Jerusalem (70 A.D.) or he may have become a resident earlier. He shows himself to be more of a Greek than a Jew, and in any case his had been a long ministry in Ephesus before the writing of the Gospel. If he lived to a very advanced age—eighty-five years or more (xxi, 23), his death would not have occurred earlier than the year 100, which may be regarded as the date of the publication of the Gospel.

6. In connection with the search for the author the question finally arises: Does this Gospel betray the fact that it was written by an eye-witness? Are there traces in it of a character that make it clear it was written by one who had known Jesus personally? Fortunately, a beautiful parallel example exists in Greek literature—Plato's portrayal of Socrates. Though it differs radically from that of Xenophon, it by no means proves that Plato had never known Socrates.

Any one who has difficulty in understanding John's way of presenting Jesus should read the Phaedo and then some of the later Dialogues of Plato. The way in which Plato has portrayed his master and his teaching led Phillips Brooks and others to refer to Plato as the Beloved Disciple of Socrates. Recently, a large amount of new information regarding the environment of John's Gospel has come to light; and the question of eye-witness authorship has as-

sumed new aspects. It used to be too readily assumed by scholars that the Fourth Gospel could not have been written by a personal disciple.

Some of the facts involved in a reconsideration of the question are: (a) The recognition that the evidence is very slight for identifying the Beloved Disciple with John, the son of Zebedee, has disposed of the old alternative of Galilean authorship as against second century authorship. (b) The abundant illustrations of the "I" style in religious instruction in the Hellenistic world have made the problem of the use of it in John's report of Jesus' words a very simple one. (c) The study of the mystery religions of the first century has made the attitude toward Jesus reflected in the Gospel natural and intelligible. (d) The revelation of their colloquial style and dialect in newly discovered papyri has clearly shown that the Fourth Gospel was not composed as a treatise on theology or Christology, but that it is really written in extremely simple language for popular use.

(a) Was the author the fisherman of Galilee or was he a second-century theologian, was the old alternative regarding authorship. Traditionalists held the former, and students of historical theology leaned to the latter. No interest was taken in a middle ground.

The alternative is well stated by Bacon.[10] Discussing the lack of geographical knowledge of Galilee shown by the author of the Gospel, he says: "The limitation of his . . . knowledge . . . and . . . the transfer from Galilee to Jerusalem of the center of gravity of Jesus' work bespeak not the companion of Jesus' walks about the villages of Galilee and Perea, but the pilgrim antiquary of a century after, whose starting point is Jerusalem."

It is generally admitted that the author had knowledge of Jerusalem topography. His limited knowledge of Galilee, and emphasis upon the Judean ministry, argue against authorship by the son of Zebedee, but have no weight against

[10] *The Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate*, p. 389.

authorship by a Jerusalem disciple. It is quite generally admitted that the author's information regarding the last week in some particulars surpasses that of the synoptic gospels. Those who held to second-century authorship supposed that this superiority was due to the sources which the author had at hand, composed by an earlier writer.

Certain passages in the Gospel plainly suggest authorship by an eye-witness. In xix, 35, in the scene at the cross it is possible to regard the words as based upon an earlier source, but in the light of other passages it is more natural to take them on the authority of the author of the Gospel: "He that has seen has born witness in order that you also may believe." Other passages of this kind will be noted in the later chapters of this volume. "There are," as Scott says, "several historical questions of capital importance (*e.g.*, the length of our Lord's ministry, the procedure followed at the trial, the date of the Crucifixion) in which the evidence of the Fourth Gospel seems preferable to that of the other three."[11] Bacon (Chap. XV) believes that the author had been in Palestine. Moffatt (p. 547), who holds to second-century authorship, admits there are passages indicating the author had been in Jerusalem before the year 70. Burton[12] concludes that the author's knowledge of Jewish customs, and the Jewish calendar, and of the topography of Jerusalem indicate a probability that he had resided in Palestine before the destruction of Jerusalem. All seem to agree that the author had lived in or near Jerusalem for a shorter or longer time.

In this connection the first Epistle of John adds its bit of evidence. It was probably written by the same author as the Gospel. Similarities in style are so numerous and striking as to make the probability almost conclusive. The evidence is well given by Brooke in the International Critical Commentary, pp. i-xix.

Take I John i, 1, 2, which states: "That which . . . we

[11] *Hist. and Rel. Value*, pp. 13-14.

[12] *Short Introduction to the Gospels*, pp. 105, 109.

have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled . . . we have seen and bear witness and declare unto you the life . . . which . . . was manifested unto us." These words, as Brooke says, "can only be interpreted naturally as a claim on the writer's part to have been an actual eye-witness of the earthly life of Jesus Christ."

(b) Again, it has been commonly held that the author could not be a personal disciple of Jesus because of his use of what has now been named the "I" style of teaching. Evidence has now been published which shows that throwing the teaching and rank of the central figure of a religion into the first person by his leading followers was an accepted religious usage of the times. Examples are best given by Deissmann in his "Light from the Ancient East" (II, 3, E.). They prove that the "I" style for religious use was as natural in Ephesus as are the Archaic English forms in use among us in worship today. This made it as easy for John in giving his Christian teaching to assume the "I" style as it is in modern times for any Church member to pick up the forms "Thee" and "Thou" and "Art" and "Wast" when offering prayer. John could put his thought of Jesus into the forms "I am the door," "I am the good shepherd," where no living follower of Jesus today would think of saying anything but "He is the door," "He is the good shepherd." They represent the easy natural religious language of Ephesus, and do not presuppose a scholastic background or a theological attitude either on the part of John or of Jesus. This subject will be discussed at much greater length in later chapters, especially in the comments on John x.

(c) A third difficulty with eye-witness authorship is usually stated thus: No one who had personally known Jesus could possibly think of him as the preëxistent Logos and use the terms approaching deification of him found in this Gospel. Recent study of the mystery religions has given us a somewhat different basis from which to

view this situation. On coming to Ephesus, John would find that the Christian religion there, which had already developed into a cult of Jesus, had adopted many words and ideas from the Hellenistic religions. Naturally an Ephesus author of the Gospel would accept much of what he found. Even Paul, who had lived many years in Jerusalem, and was a contemporary of Jesus, had in Hellenistic lands spoken of Jesus in terms implying his preëxistence and his divinity. What Paul did the "Beloved Disciple" may also do. John only follows a precedent which Paul had set. Paul's three years in Ephesus preceded John's coming by many years and it was along the lines of the teaching of Paul that the Ephesian church had developed. The author of this Gospel, as will be explained in the chapter on The Prologue, does not so much advance a theology original with himself as endeavor to translate his views of the Christian experience into the terms of the thought-world which he found in Ephesus. No obstacle to finding in the Gospel a view of Jesus entirely natural to one who had been his personal disciple remains if it is borne in mind from the outset that when John came to Ephesus he found the Cult of Jesus far advanced beyond the gospel as preached by Paul. See the section on Gnosticism in the next chapter; see also comments on John viii, 58.

(d) A fourth consideration is the bearing of the popular style of the Gospel on the problem of its authorship. Until very recent years it was generally supposed that the language of the Gospel was a Semitic Greek, *i.e.*, the product that might be expected from the effort of a Jew to write in the Greek language. The "and . . . and . . . and" paratactic form of expression found throughout the Gospel was explained as a Hebraism. Thousands of private letters and other domestic documents which have been discovered and published in recent years have thrown a flood of light across the pages of this Gospel.

It is now clear that the striking peculiarity of the style of the Fourth Gospel is the marked simplicity of its col-

loquial and narrative language and not its Semitic quality. The book is not written in the Greek of the philosopher or historian, but in the vernacular of the people. This discovery of its utterly informal character dispels much of the atmosphere of dogmatic theology which has been used as an argument against its eye-witness authorship. Rather it may now be said that the narratives of this Gospel endeavor to give Paul's spiritual Christ a body of flesh and to make concrete and popularly intelligible a Jesus who at Ephesus had become too abstract and theological.

7. The conclusions that may be said to have been reached in this survey are these. The Fourth Gospel nowhere names its author. It was written by a Greek-speaking Christian leader of Ephesus. If we cannot be content to let the author remain anonymous we can reconstruct a possible identification of him as follows: There was a young man in Jerusalem, a Greek or Hellenist, whom Jesus "loved" as he "loved" Lazarus or Martha of Bethany. As Jesus ate a supper in the home of Lazarus, so in Jerusalem he ate a supper at the home of this disciple there whom he loved. It was his last supper. At the cross Jesus, thoughtful of the future of his mother, asked him to take her to his home. This disciple was among the first to visit his tomb. He moved from Jerusalem before the destruction of the city in 70 and went to Ephesus. There he found a Christian church which had developed along the lines of Paul's teaching. He labored many years among these people, ballasting their devotion to the invisible Christ by an emphasis on the reality of Jesus' earthly life and on the beauty of personal discipleship to him. During the passage of years he became known as the "veteran" or "presbyter," and may be the presbyter John mentioned by Papias and Eusebius. Toward the close of a long ministry he gathered and put together the materials of his Gospel, which was published soon after the death of its author.

Any one who desires to better his acquaintance with

the personality of the author may do so by reading the Epistles of John, which seem to be written by the same hand. The letter called II John indicates that he was, in his mature years, no such sentimental, mild-faced man as he is usually painted by the old masters. The picture there is of a vigorous preacher, a "veteran" leader. "Many deceivers are gone forth. . . . This is the deceiver and anti-Christ. . . . Give him no greeting." Again in III John we have similar testimony. Here he has an opponent whom he faces squarely. "Diotrephes, who loves to have the preëminence among them, receives us not. Therefore if I come I will bring to remembrance his works which he does, prating against us with wicked words." His capacity for large-hearted joy is reflected in II John, 4. Noticeable in I John is the way affection is combined with strength of character in his fatherly habit of saying "Beloved" and "Little children" (I John, ii, 7, 18).

Many traits in the character of the veteran leader have been grasped and well portrayed by Robert Browning in his poem, "A Death in the Desert," which gives a poet's conception of the last hours of John's life:

> We had him bedded on a camel-skin
> And waited for his dying all the while.
>
> Then the boy sprang up from his knees
>
> And spoke, as 'twere his mouth proclaiming first,
> "I am the Resurrection and the Life."
> Whereat he opened his eyes wide at once
> And sat up of himself, and looked at us.
>
> "Nay, do not give me wine, for I am strong,
> "But place my gospel where I put my hands.
>
> "For if there be a further woe
> "Wherein my brothers struggling need a hand,
> "So long as any pulse is left in mine,
> "May I be absent even longer yet,
> "Plucking the blind ones back from the abyss,
> "Though I should tarry a new hundred years."

CHAPTER II

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GOSPEL

The Gospel of John has many peculiar characteristics which affect its whole structure. They are as recognizable as traits of character in a man or woman. The Gospel is a vital part of the life, in fact, of the man who wrote it, and is a reflection and index in considerable measure for that reason of his personality. Scott in reading the character of the author from the pages of the Gospel says that he "is not primarily a theologian, but a man of profound religious feeling. Ideas flow in upon him from various sources—from primitive Christian tradition, Paulinism, Alexandrian speculation; and he does not attempt to reason them out, or to coördinate them into a system. . . . As long as he responds to them with some side of his religious nature, he is willing to accept them. He tests them, not by any logical criterion, but by an inward tact and sympathy."[1] Let us go on to name and describe some of these peculiar characteristics:

1. In the first place, the author carries on a constant partisan controversy with the Jews. At the time he is composing his Gospel Christianity is severing the ties of its origin with Judaism even more radically than in Paul's day. Jews far outnumbered Christians in the Empire, but in Ephesus it would seem that the race between them was close. Although the Jews were making proselytes, the Christian church had a chance, with vigorous preaching, to outstrip its rival. Our author felt keenly on the sub-

[1] *Fourth Gospel*, pp. 14-15.

ject of the imperfection and inferiority of some features of the Jewish religion. Although Jesus and all the Apostles were Jews, the striking fact which confronts the reader of John's Gospel is that in Ephesus, nevertheless, the mere phrase, "the Jews," without qualification, seems sufficient to reveal the identity of the opponents of Christianity. It occupies the same place as "hypocrites" or "scribes and Pharisees" occupy in the synoptic gospels.

The hostility in John's Gospel toward the Jews has usually been laid solely to the rivalry between the Jewish synagogue and the Christian church in Ephesus. A second consideration, however, should enter into it. As will be explained in our next chapter, John had a preference for the conversational style of presentation. A definite dramatic clash must be led up to in his succession of question and answer because the purpose of such dialogue always is to bring out more clearly the author's views of its spiritual significance. A party of the second part who should play the part of the objector or of the spiritually obtuse is necessary to the discussion as he conducts it. The author uses "the Jews" for this purpose throughout the Gospel. "Certain of the Jews," or "certain dull-minded persons," would have answered, but "the Jews" was shorter and simpler. Gardner says concerning chapter vi of the Gospel (p. 207-8): "It may seem a violent interpretation, when the Evangelist says 'the Jews,' to interpret him as meaning any literalist, whether Jew or Gentile, but it is clear that he uses the word in this sense in passage after passage. At any rate, 'the Jews' are opponents of the truth, and not convinced adherents. The stupidity and materialism of the auditors is used as a foil to bring out the noble spirituality of the teaching."

2. A second characteristic of the Gospel is a polemic attitude toward the sect of John the Baptist. Much has been learned in recent years about this sect. The religion of John the Baptist seems to have been a thriving one, for traces of it are found down into the third century. It

will help greatly to understand the Fourth Gospel if we think that a church of the sect of John the Baptist was probably located a short distance from the Christian church in which our author was preaching in Ephesus. Jesus said that before his coming there was none greater than the Baptist, but in the Fourth Gospel his insignificance is emphasized. He becomes merely a "witness" to Jesus and when that is given, his part is played.

The heart of the preaching of the Baptist was the picture of a coming terrible Day of Judgment. His followers in Ephesus probably preached a similar gospel of waiting for a judgment. This would be in sharp contrast to one who defined judgment in the words of John iii, 19, and who preached a joy of abundance of life in Jesus. The polemic against the sect of the Baptist may be read in every mention of the Forerunner in the Gospel. The church of the Baptist in Ephesus is described in Acts xviii, 24 to xix, 7. This subject will be presented more in detail in the comments on John i, 19-28.

3. A third characteristic is the nature of the author's purpose, which is religious rather than historical or theological. Not by any mental acceptance of the presentation of the way of salvation through Christ by some apostle did Paul become a Christian. Paul had found Jesus by spiritual contact with him personally. That had emancipated him from slavery to Jewish ceremonialism and legalism. In like manner John bases his religion upon the power of Jesus personally manifested in his own life and in the lives of other Christians. Although unfortunately we have no such knowledge of the author's conversion as we have of Paul's, it is less necessary because universal Christian experience is his starting point.

John always puts religion first. His Gospel is in no sense intended to be a mere compendium of historical facts concerning Jesus. It advocates a living and many sided reincarnation in Ephesus of the life of Jesus. Luke's statement of the purpose of his Gospel makes an interest-

ing contrast with John's statement of his purpose. Luke's purpose was "to write to you in explicit order, most excellent Theophilus, so that you might know the certainty concerning the things in which you were instructed." John states his purpose in xx, 31, "These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, through believing, you may have life in his name." Where there are two parallel members of a statement in John, the emphasis is upon the second (cf. iii, 5). His purpose, therefore, in his Gospel is that men and women may attain the higher "life." Life in John always means a new and different life not to be found elsewhere that begins at the time of entering into fellowship with Jesus.

The statement that John places religion above history is sometimes misunderstood to mean that he has no particular interest in the Jesus of history, but is mainly concerned with a theological system. Exactly the reverse is true. The author uses history as a basis of his religion. It was his conscious task and his supreme accomplishment to combine the two.

4. Emphasis upon the historical Jesus as the source and foundation of the Christian religion is a distinct characteristic of the Gospel. The Christian religion which the author found there on coming to Ephesus had been developed out of the teaching of Paul. Paul had had practically nothing to say concerning the ministry of Jesus. His teaching centered around the death and resurrection. The prevailing mystery religions of the first century that afford a very clear idea of the nature of the cult which had developed in Ephesus will be described in connection with our comments on John xi.

Finding in Ephesus a mystery cult of Jesus tending toward speculation, asceticism, mysticism and Gnosticism, John conceived it to be his chief duty to subject it to the modifications sure to follow upon a personal acquaintance with the earthly Jesus. He felt that the power of the

Spirit and the "Gifts of the Spirit" (*cf.*, I Cor. xii-xiv) must not continue unrelated among them to Jesus of Nazareth. The example and inspiration which Jesus had been to his personal followers, through their intimate acquaintance with him, John felt could still be maintained after Jesus was gone. Not in forgetting the earthly Jesus, as Pauline Christians were doing, would Christians live best, but by holding to the facts of his life as the basis of communion with that invisible Lord who dwells spiritually among his followers. Why should they miss the undying inspiration enshrined in the story of the simple companionship of the first disciples with Jesus in Galilee? For this purpose he wrote of Jesus as he himself had known him in order to intertwine that Jesus with the exalted Jesus that was being worshiped in Ephesus. His Gospel injected into the Ephesian worship a vivid sense of the historic Jesus. The powerful appeal of the Hellenistic mystery religions lay in their promise of a fullness of life. Jewish Christianity rested its cause upon the example in Jesus of brotherly self-sacrificing love. Hellenistic Christianity by combining the two became a world-religion. It was John who did the work of combination. In his Christianity the fullness of life in the Gifts of the Spirit mingled and was mixed with a personal discipleship to "Jesus of Nazareth."

5. The means employed by John to effect the combination was the use of symbolism. An Ephesian significance was given to the opening of the eyes of a blind man by Jesus in Galilee or Jerusalem by making the story a symbol of the standing miracle of the giving of light to darkened or blinded souls constantly taking place before their eyes in Ephesus. Light was one of the largest words of the mystery religions, but as it figured in those religions, light was largely impersonal. A bond with Palestine for the high place given to light in the religion of Ephesus was provided in John's Gospel by making Jesus himself (John ix) the "Light of the World." Not only

the work of opening the eyes of the blind which Jesus began in Palestine was Jesus continuing in Ephesus, but he continued to feed the "hungry" in Ephesus (John vi) as he had also fed the "hungry" multitude in Palestine. John similarly carried out his use of symbolism into many other phases of daily life. Marriage, birth, water, bread, illness, death—all appear both as incidents in the ministry of Jesus and as symbols of spiritual events in Ephesus. Thus the author did his work of combining the earthly life of Jesus and the language and life and Christian religion current in the Greek city of Ephesus, where he had made his home.

6. The resemblance of the Gospel of John to the teaching of Paul is a close one. The usual way of putting it is to say that Paul is the mediating link between John and the earlier gospels. This is likely to be understood to mean that together the three form a straight line of development. Possibly it would be better to say that John brought the Pauline religion back from its later wanderings toward a realization of the historic Jesus, from which it had strayed too far. In any case the Gospel of John cannot be perfectly understood without an acquaintance with Paul and his gospel. Emphasis upon the power of the Spirit as the regenerating agency of God is fundamental both for Paul and for John. Drawing a sharp contrast between the non-Christian and the Christian life is also fundamental for both. It has sometimes been said that the Fourth Gospel is such a gospel as Paul would have composed if he had attempted to write one. Paul set such store by the regenerating influence of the Spirit and felt that a knowledge of the Palestinian career of the historic Jesus was so relatively unimportant that he never thought of writing a gospel.

In the days between the death of Paul and the days of John's Gospel, however, the "spirit" had led different men in opposite paths. Some had gone the road to absolute asceticism and to mystic contemplation which quite

ignored "obedience" (John iii, 36; xiv, 15) to Jesus' commandments to serve others. On the other hand, another group, led by the "spirit" to an opposite pole, allowed themselves all sorts of personal indulgence, pointing in justification to Paul's teaching that for the Christian there is no law (Gal. v, 18). While John felt that there was room in the Church for wide divergence of opinion, he saw the need was general of forming the acquaintance of the historic Jesus and his "new" commandment as a corrective influence. We may expect to find, then, a large amount of Pauline thought in the Gospel of John and of developments of Pauline thought along the lines of the mystery religions and Gnostic philosophy; but we shall also find John skillfully introducing a generous measure of salient incidents in his earthly life in order to plead for a personal loyalty to Jesus and his "new" commandment as the safest basis of the new "life."

7. A seventh characteristic is its hostility toward Gnosticism. Gnosticism or Gnostic Christianity laid an emphasis upon the deity of Christ that took all the reality out of his life and death. The humanity of Jesus dropped out of sight in the theological teaching of the relation that he was said to sustain to God. Later Gnostics, of whom Marcion is a good example, held that the Son of God born in Nazareth was not a babe really, but a full-grown man descended from heaven, and that he felt no real pain upon the cross because his humanity from the day of his birth was only an appearance.

Gnosticism was an atmosphere rather than a separate institution in Ephesus. Many of its elements were indigenous in Greek civilization. Some of these were fundamental to the Greek way of thinking and could not be changed. The author's purpose was not to combat or destroy Gnosticism, but to modify and enrich it by inducing it to take up into itself a powerful realization of the humanity of Jesus and of the actuality of his suffering. In reading the Gospel, it is well not to be misled by the author's tacit

acceptance of teachings that were indispensable to Greek thinking which have no bearing on his main purpose.

As the author is himself a Hellenist it is natural to find him adopting the dualistic conception of the relation of God and man, adopting also the sharp contrast between the earthly man and the spiritual, between the children of darkness and the children of light. These ideas he shared with Gnosticism. On the other hand, John's Gospel is full of passages which reflect and assert the full humanity of Jesus. The force of these passages can be fully understood only when the Gnostics among the author's audience are kept in mind. John insists that Jesus was of Nazareth, of the family of Joseph (i, 45), a statement that would be anathema to a Gnostic. He narrates that "Jesus wept" (John xi, 35). More than once he says that Jesus "groaned in his spirit" (xi, 33) or that his "soul was troubled" (xii, 27; xiii, 21).

8. The author's attitude toward apocalyptic ideas of the second coming of Jesus is worthy of careful study. No Christian leader ever used more tact or showed a wiser spirit in handling this subject than John. As in the case of Gnosticism, so here he was waging no polemic. He never explicitly denies any feature of the current Apocalypticism. It is evident that many in his audience put their faith in literal fulfillment of Jewish Messianic prophecies. Others who were more Greek in thought found difficulty with these prophecies. The author makes no claim to know the future. What he does is to try to induce them all to take up into their apocalyptic ideas of the second coming a spiritual meaning immediately useful and usable. To those who insist that there is a terrible Day of Judgment coming when the wicked on the earth shall be destroyed by the "wrath of God" (iii, 36), he says, "This is the judgment, that light has come into the world, and men have loved darkness rather than the light" (iii, 19). Again when he says, "The hour is coming, and that hour is already here, when the dead shall hear the voice of the

Son of God (v, 25), he means the spiritually dead. He who believes "has passed out of death into life" (v, 24).

9. John's idea of the Church is peculiar to his Gospel. The confusion of religions and philosophies in Ephesus led its adopted citizen to see the need of a unified Christianity. John wished, as we have said before, to inject into the situation the ballast and steadying power that he was sure would accompany a realization of the historic Jesus. His peculiar idea of the Church is in line with this purpose. Jesus had surrounded himself with a group of disciples who helped him in his work. John felt that the true Church was a company of disciples who continue to keep that same fellowship with each other in Jesus alive in the world. All Jesus asked of his disciples was that they should take up his cross and help him bear the burden of establishing the Kingdom of God in the hearts of men. In contrast to the loosely knit and largely unorganized groups of disciples who formed the communities of Paul's converts waiting for the Coming of the Lord, John gave to Christianity a conception of Church fellowship that made the early Christian communities the admiration and the envy of the pagan world.

In the Gospel of John the Church is not a company made up of those who all hold the same beliefs. It is a company made up of those who keep Jesus' "commandments" (xv, 10) and are thus related to him as the branches to the vine. This group of disciples are sharply distinguishable from the rest of the world. For they have responded lavishly to his message to love one another. This close linking of Christians to one another in loyal discipleship to their historic master gave Christianity great superiority in prestige over Judaism and the mystery religions and Stoic philosophies, which also taught a higher life that they were unable to objectify for lack of the personal loyalty to Jesus which gave to John's Christians their peculiar consciousness of solidarity and unity.

10. The prominence of the three words, Light, Life

and Belief in him, or Loyalty, constitutes another feature of the Gospel of John. "Light" was a word with a long history and many associations, particularly in Gnosticism and other Hellenistic philosophies. It was in common use as a symbol signifying knowledge, particularly knowledge of God. Besides a simpler there was also a more philosophic use of the term. In the more philosophic sense the light of knowledge was conceived as an actual presence and active influence at work in the world dispelling darkness of mind and illuminating the lives of men. Scott says: "To the Greek mind the highest good was identified with perfect knowledge; and for more than five centuries the great philosophers had been striving after that knowledge. It was assumed that the 'wise man' —the man who rightly apprehended the nature of God— would raise himself above earthly circumstances, and become, in some measure, like God."[2]

John finds both the simpler and the more philosophic use suited to his purpose of conveying to his audience the significance of the historical Jesus. Jesus is "the Light of the World" (viii, 12; ix, 5). In the simpler Palestinian sense Jesus enlightens us by adding to our store of the knowledge of God and God's purpose in the world. John had seen the presence of God in the beauty of Jesus' life of love and beneficence. But the word is also used in John's Gospel in the more philosophic Greek sense of "light" as a higher, living influence, powerful enough to elevate men's lives and fortunes. John knew this more philosophic idea was in everyday use among his people. He put Jesus into their thought-world by making the bold claim that in Jesus we see the incarnation of this cosmic light whose mission is to ennoble the lives of men and guide their destinies.

How this more philosophic Greek idea of the function of light works out might be paraphrased in modern terms somewhat thus: The light of knowledge is diffused through

[2] *Hist. and Rel. Value*, p. 46.

humanity and works on human nature in as direct and definite a way as the rays of the sun work upon plant life. A plant cannot grow and blossom without light. A sick person is benefited by sunshine. The human spirit is sick and dwarfed until it submits itself to the life-giving, health-giving rays of the light of true knowledge. The light of knowledge has been in the world from the "beginning" lighting "every man" (John i, 2, 9). But in Jesus the light came close to men, focussed with such brilliancy and radiating its power and vitality with such force as to make him the Savior of the world.

The significance of John's identification of the infectious quality of the personal life of Jesus with the Greek cosmic light principle is that the combination resulted in a gospel which met the approval and won the allegiance both of simple people and of the philosophically or scientifically minded. It universalized and internationalized the life of Jesus as triumphantly as did Paul, but, unlike Paul, it preserved the concrete example of his earthly life and emphasized its office. Jesus' life became crammed with meaning as a revelation of what the life-giving, health-giving rays of the light of true knowledge when given full right of way could do in, and for, and with our human nature.

11. The second of the three vital words of John's Gospel is "Life." "Life" almost never means to John mere physical life, but is practically always used in a larger sense; and in this larger sense, as in the case of the word "light," it always has two distinct aspects, a simpler, Palestinian and a more scientific or philosophic, Greek one. The purpose of John's Gospel, as stated in xx, 31, is that through believing men may have "life."

The simpler use of the term is based directly upon the Palestinian point of view of Jesus as master and his disciples as students. In Jesus' day the Jews had concentrated their dreams of God's highest blessings in the thought of the Messianic Age to come. The life of the

"age to come," *i.e.*, "eternal life," was the greatest hope of every individual (Mar. x, 17, 30). John drops the Jewish conception of a coming Kingdom largely, but retains "eternal life" and energizes it by bringing it down to earth from the clouds. He will have it that the new store of knowledge of God which his students gain from Jesus puts the possession of "eternal life" here and now within their grasp.

Here again Paul supplies the missing link between the simpler, Palestinian and the developed philosophic, Greek use of the term "life." Paul put great emphasis upon the power of the Spirit in regenerating believers. He felt that the indwelling Spirit was a token and "first installment" of that future life of the Kingdom (II Cor., i, 22; v, 5; Eph., i, 14). John goes a step farther and says that the present life in the Spirit is life at its highest, and that the future life is no more than a consequence and natural prolongation of it. "Life," then, for John means a life lived in accordance with the principles of the Kingdom laid down by Jesus, and might be described as the life of the Kingdom lived in the present.

This becomes for John the bond with Palestine for the other more philosophic significance of the word current in Greek thought. The Greeks thought of the material as base, and entanglement in it a captivity. Parallel with the world of material is the principle of energy or life which animates all things. God is the supreme influence above all material things. The supreme good is attained by putting oneself into spiritual contact with the Source of all life. A man thus receives the "fullness" of life which rescues him from all the petty entanglements of physical existence. He enters into a sort of divine life in union with the divine Spirit.

Such idealistic communion with God was extremely difficult, John says, until Christ came. But he makes easier the establishment of this contact with the Life that is above life. In him we have the essence of God in fleshly form,

so that in discipleship to him we enter, as it were, through an open "door" (x, 7) into the divine life. His life is an object lesson to us in the way to let the divine life infiltrate into human existence. Men now "have no excuse" (xv, 22). Any man or woman for all time can enter into close communion with God and receive the power to live the life eternal.

This Greek contribution to the term "Life" might perhaps be paraphrased in modern ideas as follows: Any one who looks at magnificent mountain scenery feels a certain response in his nature. A man who on a clear summer night gazes long and earnestly into the heavens and tries to lose himself among the stars feels a certain sense of uplift which helps him bear the burden of the day. This is because man's soul tends upward. If freed for a while from its physical prison it rejoices and gains new strength. This is the explanation of the power of Jesus. In the midst of most limiting circumstances his spirit rejoiced in a freedom and fullness of life. All men know that the natural man goes through life teased, tormented and more or less depressed all the time by a prisoner-like sense that his life thus far has been a helpless captivity. The longing to escape is eating out his heart. The sort of divine life that would result from union with the divine Spirit is the only way out for us from our entanglement in the material, said the Greek, but how to find it we do not seem to know, for few of us do. In Jesus, John said to them, I will show you the way out. He and God were never far apart. He was the incarnation of this free and full life. By entering into communion with him any man or woman of you may appropriate and assimilate this spirit of freedom and of victory and make it your own.

John's contribution to the spread of Christianity through the world consisted in thus linking together a Palestinian and a Greek way of stating the Christian way of salvation or emancipation from the material so as to express with double power the significance of Jesus. It gave the Chris-

tian gospel a cosmic and scientific basis in present life. It universalized its appeal. Every one wishes life, more abundant life. It is the great consuming desire of humanity. John proclaims to every one: In him is Life.

12. The third of the three great Johannine words is "Believe on (in) him." "To believe in" Jesus is the high road to the new way of Life. "To believe in" him in the Gospel of John means to let down the bars that stand between us and close personal fellowship with him, in particular to open our hearts to receive his spirit and to obey his commands. Here again the word is used in two ways. Here again John splices the importance of direct discipleship to Jesus with the speculative Christianity of Ephesus.

In the simpler sense John appeals for the same kind of belief in Jesus as was shown by his first disciples. Belief in him closed the circuit between them and influences by which their lives were transformed; for his spirit entered into them and enabled them to become imitators of him. Their fellowship with him was the source of their Life. John preaches to the natural man everywhere that the way out of his helpless captivity is this same fellowship to which belief in Jesus leads. By dwelling on his deeds and meditating on his words and communion with his spirit, any man may "believe on him" and reap the same harvest of life which blessed the first disciples.

On the other hand, this relationship may be thought of in another way as one which was very natural to the people of Ephesus. For centuries the Greeks had been accustomed to think that a divine spirit or power actually enters into human beings under certain conditions, causing some to dance sacred dances, others to utter oracles, others to reveal divine truths. This general notion had sobered down in the religions of the first century into a practice of performing certain rites and ceremonies to encourage the entrance of a, or the, divine spirit into the hearts of communicants. But this indwelling force or spiritual es-

sence was still conceived as in a very realistic sense giving its possessor the victory.

With this background to work from it was not hard for John to explain what followed the entrance of the Christian Spirit into the hearts of believers. The Spirit changes, cleanses, ennobles, regenerates. The Spirit makes us children of God, not merely by an act of God in our birth, but by an act of our own. It is only a matter of opening the door of the soul, but the Spirit cannot enter while that door remains shut. This is what it means to "believe in" Jesus. It is to put ourselves into touch with influences powerful enough to overcome all the obstacles to loyalty to Jesus, through "knowing" him personally and through obedience to his "commandments."

This more concrete and workable view of the union of Christ and the believer might be paraphrased in modern terms with the loss of only a small part of its realism, as follows: By personal contact with Jesus his immediate disciples were played upon by invisible forces which imparted to them his higher life. They, in turn, persuaded others who received the same new power of life. We are a part of the unbroken succession. We all receive life and nourishment from him as truly as the branches of a grapevine receive their vitality from the stalk to which they are joined (xv, 1). It is impossible to remain in close contact with him long without being affected by it. Any one who has a note or chord of mysticism in his nature will find this beautifully expressed in Emerson's essay on "The Oversoul."

The relation of the three ideas of Light, Life and Belief in him may be expressed by saying that Jesus is the Sun (Mal. iv, 2) whose rays bring Life and Health to those who come out of the dark into his light. He is the Light, in whom we have Life, through loyalty to him.

All these twelve characteristics combine to show that John sought to universalize the principle that power unto salvation is only to be found in the fellowship of Jesus.

He linked up Christianity more closely with the ministry of Jesus than any other religion has ever been linked to the career of its founder. He set forth the life of Jesus of Galilee in terms of lasting significance. He was one of the last men in the world able to do this because he wrote just at the time the Christian religion was entering an era in which there would be no one to say that he had known Jesus. John made it forever impossible for a speculative Christianity which left those days in Palestine entirely out like the one he found active in Ephesus, to live again anywhere in the world. He could not make the language of the Galilean gospel with its Messiah and Messianic Kingdom and Apocalyptic Coming understood in his non-Jewish environment. John, therefore, made the term Messiah mean Son of God. He made the Kingdom a present spiritual brotherhood, he interpreted apocalyptic imagery so that it had a present meaning. His re-statement of the Christian gospel appealed to every class and race and type. He proclaimed that the opportunity for life eternal which was given to men through Jesus was not given once for all, but is a continuous gift, open from age to age to any man anywhere who will believe in him.

CHAPTER III

THE POPULAR QUALITY OF THE GOSPEL

1. The key to the literary style of the Gospel of John has been secured in recent years from the study of papyrus documents of the same general period. Hundreds upon hundreds of ancient documents have been discovered, including large numbers of private letters of common folks of the first century which reveal to us the colloquial language of the people of the time. The New Testament and, in particular, the Gospel of John are full of peculiarities of style not found in classical or in any distinctly literary Greek. This peculiar Greek of John's Gospel used to be accounted for as the result of the attempt of a Jew (John) to write the Greek language. But probability now leans decidedly in the direction of recognizing as colloquial most of the expressions which used to be explained as Hebraistic.

An outstanding example of what we mean is the frequent use of the paratactic form of sentence with its constant repetition of the word "and." In every part of the Gospel we find this frequent use of "And . . . and . . . and," familiar to us, also in our own American colloquial style of narrative. Who of us tells a story orally without using the word "and" more times than he would use it in writing the same story?

Deissmann gives us many examples of this "and" style from the papyri.[1] A complaint to a judge (originally oral) reads as follows: "Yesterday as we were returning at dawn from Theadelphia two bandits fell on us and bound us and the watchman and struck us several times and wounded Pasion and took a pig from us and stole Pasion's

[1] *Light from the Ancient East*, chap. II, 3, E.

coat and . . .'' Another example is taken from one of several healing accounts found on a marble tablet in Rome. We can almost hear the man telling of his cure: ''To Valerius Aper a blind soldier the god gave direction to go and take blood from a white rooster mixed with honey and to mix a salve and to anoint his eyes for three days and he could see again and came and gave thanks publicly to the god.''

Compare the repetiton of ''and'' in John ix, 11. ''He answered, The man who is called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, Go to Siloam and wash: When I went and washed I received sight. And . . .'' Compare also the preceding verses, John ix, 6, 7. This ''and'' style appears in every chapter of the Gospel. Even in the prologue, sometimes considered formal and philosophical, we find the same usage: ''In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And light shines in the darkness; and the darkness has never overcome it'' (i, 4, 5).

The impression that the contents of this Gospel were spoken before being published, and were written down pretty much as spoken, is strengthened by many other observations.

There are numerous usages of single words shown by the papyri to belong to popular dialect but not found in literary Greek, which are employed by John in his Gospel. One such usage is represented by the expression ''full'' in i, 14. This word is in the nominative or subjective case, where literary syntax would call for the objective case. But in the colloquial style the word is treated as indeclinable just as John has it.[2] Another usage is represented by the example, ''own'' in i, 41. This is a perfect instance of colloquial tautology. John meant no such emphasis upon the word ''own'' as all the older commentators felt must be present. The usage has been clearly shown to be a bit of popular dialect (See comments on the passage in this volume).

[2] Deissmann, chap. II 3, D.

Again, the frequent and rapid change of tense in narrative, together with the constant use of the historical present, is another indication of informal spoken presentation as distinguished from literary exactness: "It was about noon. There comes a woman of Samaria" (iv. 6, 7). In the sections of text given in this volume the alternation of tenses is preserved at the expense of smoothness, in order to give the right impression of the author's graphic style.

2. In addition to the popular style in word and syntax there is the conversational form of the narrative. There is no other book of the New Testament where question and answer follow each other so extensively as in the scene of Nicodemus talking with Jesus at night, in the narrative of the woman at the well, and in the discussion concerning the bread of life. Many a modern book reader turns the pages of a new book to see how much of dialogue the pages contain. This conversation-style at times in John takes an almost dramatic turn. Always playing the part of objectors, "the Jews" appear at opportune moments when the author wishes to explain to his audience more in detail the significance of a saying or deed of Jesus. When Jesus says (vi, 41) I am the bread that has come down out of heaven, the "Jews" object (42), Is he not Joseph's son? Again a few verses later the "Jews" ask, How can he give us his flesh to eat (52)? The author thus avoids implying that his audience is dull and at the same time he can introduce explanations suited to even the most simple-minded. (See remarks concerning "the Jews" in our preceding chapter.) The Gospel, in other words, is the work of a public speaker making a popular appeal.

3. In line with the interest of the author in the dramatic is his fondness for contrasts. There is little twilight in the Gospel. But there is much light, and there is much darkness. There is life, and there is death. There are love and hate, truth and falsehood. There are the children of God and the children of the Devil (viii, 44). There

is the spirit over against the flesh. There are righteousness and sin, the old commandment and the new commandment, and many other alternatives, which show how fond the author is of sharp-cut, vigorous, popular description and appeal. Moreover, these contrasts all find a place in the daily life of the people. The author uses no recondite categories, for every man or woman is sensible of the terror of darkness and the joy of light, of the beauty of love and the meanness of hate, of the coldness of death and of the glow of abundant vitality.

4. One of the chief problems of the Gospel is what has come to be named the "I" style. Deissmann describes this at considerable length as one of the main features determinative of the literary character of the Gospel. He gives examples, some of which will be noted in our comments on the tenth chapter of the Gospel. Suffice it to say here that a peculiar use of the pronoun "I" in religious papyri and inscriptions was widespread and popular. When John represents Jesus as saying, "I am the good shepherd," the "I" form he uses is as much in line with the natural religious language of the people whom he is addressing as the "he" form would be for a preacher today who would say in a similar connection, "He is the good shepherd." Yet the interesting fact is that in Ephesus the people would not understand John as claiming that Jesus spoke Greek or that he had ever said these exact words concerning himself which John was saying concerning him.

Take a modern example of an audience listening to Shakespeare's presentation of Julius Cæsar. Cæsar is represented as speaking certain words in his own person. The audience understands the dramatic atmosphere and is not misled into taking them to be a historical report. This does not give an accurate idea, however, of John's situation; for when John puts the words, "I am the good shepherd," into the mouth of Jesus, it is a direct confession or declaration of faith on the part of speaker and listeners that to and for them, he *is* the good shepherd.

This is the correct interpretation of the use of the "I" style in popular language in Ephesus.

A very close religious parallel in modern times is our specialized use of "thee" and "thou." The use of these archaic forms does not mean that the user has studied old English. It is a popular, religious custom. Any Church officer or Christian leader is able to drop naturally into the use of "thee" and "thou," and when the listeners hear these words they instinctively know that a prayer has begun. So in Ephesus, when they heard John use the pronoun "I" in statements concerning Jesus, like, "I am the good shepherd," his listeners knew that his words represented a confession of his own personal faith. To reproduce a part of the ancient effect it is only necessary to substitute "Thou art" for "I am" in a reverent tone in the modern reading at every occurrence of the words. Examples of this substitution are given in our comments on John x. This employment of a usage shown to be in line with popular, religious custom in Ephesus is another evidence of the popular character of the Gospel.

5. Other evidences of a popular style are translations, repetitions and cross references. Translations of Hebrew and Aramaic terms are frequent. If this Gospel were a theological treatise it would seem strange to find the author pausing to translate such simple words as Rabbi (i, 38) and Messiah (i, 41) and Cephas (i, 42). Such aid to the reader points to the presence of a general audience. Such solicitude on the part of the author indicates an almost affectionate, personal approach and not the formalities of a technical theological discussion.

Repetitions are numerous. The assertion that John the Baptist was "not the Christ" occurs in i, 20; i, 25 (*cf.*, i, 8) and again in iii, 28. That Jesus is "the Light of the World" is stated in viii, 12, again in ix, 5. Often they occur in rapid succession within a few verses as in vi, 53-58, or serve merely to recall another narrative, as in the case of "the Lamb of God" (i, 29, and i, 36). Such repetitions

would be out of place anywhere else than in rather simple and direct appeal.

Cross references also show the author's close relation to his audience. "John was not yet cast into prison" (iii, 24). The statement is of the nature of an aside only possible where author and audience are on a particularly close and friendly footing. Where the Gospel facts were familiar to all parties concerned, such a remark strengthens an author's sympathetic mental and spiritual contact with his hearers. How grateful the ordinary reader is for such a compliment to his intelligence as in xix, 39, "And there came also Nicodemus, he who at the first came to him by night." The Gospel is full of such cross references which have no necessary place that emphasize the popular style and point of view. They have all helped to make this Gospel the most readable and probably the most loved of all the Gospels.

6. The attitude of the Gospel toward theology and doctrine ought not to be hard now to discover. It has been customary to say that we must understand the author as "writing as he does with an express theological intention," or that the supreme purpose of the Fourth Gospel was the re-statement of the "complete system" of Christian doctrine in terms of Hellenistic philosophy. There is a grain of truth in these, as in most statements. The Fourth Gospel has its theology; and the author is a Hellenist. It does not follow, however, that the Gospel is a treatise on Hellenistic theology.

The author of the Fourth Gospel was under the control, like Jesus, his master, of an immediate, practical purpose. His purpose was that his hearers might "have life" (xx, 31). He has little patience with teachers who do not understand the power of the Spirit. Satire against learning of a certain sort crops out here and there. "Are you teacher of Israel and do not understand these things?" (iii, 10.) "How does this man have such learning when he has never studied?" (vii, 15.) We may imagine

John in full sympathy with Paul in his saying that the gospel may be foolishness to philosophers but to those who are saved by it, it is the power of God unto life (I Cor. i, 18-21).

Indeed, there is warrant for the statement that John refused to have anything to do with doctrine as doctrine. His supreme purpose is to bring men and women within the scope of the influences that will make them disciples of Jesus, and by entrance into fellowship with him experience the joy and power of the new Life. Was Jesus human or divine? John's answer might be said to be that he was both. If the emphasis is to be put on either side, the need just then in Ephesus in his judgment is to put it upon the reality of Jesus' earthly career. We have noted in the previous chapter the anti-Gnostic and anti-Docetic quality of the Gospel. Again, if John were to be asked "Is God a person or spirit?" his answer would be that God is Spirit (iv, 24; i, 18), but that through Jesus we may enter into personal relationship with him (xiv, 9-10; x, 30). Or, if John were asked whether he regarded the miracles as the basis of belief in Jesus, he would answer that as symbols of eternal spiritual truths of Christian experience, the miracles are "signs" of his power as Savior.

Again, concerning the question of the second coming and the judgment day, John's interest is not in any dogmatic statement pertaining to a more or less distant future, but in a present enrichment of life to which they may contribute through an awakening and exaltation of believers. See comments on v, 24-25; iii, 19. We can imagine Paul and James confronting John and asking, "Is salvation by faith or by works?" (Gal. iii, 6-9; cf. James ii, 21, 24.) John's answer is that "belief in him" puts a man in touch with the divine aid that enables him in loyalty to Jesus to do his commandments; so that the two become practically identical. It is through knowledge gained in personal discipleship that we attain the life which is sal-

vation. Is salvation, then, present or future? John's answer is that we enter now into eternal life and begin at once a heavenly existence that is never to end (v. 24).

To say that the Gospel of John is theological in purpose and point of view is not the whole truth. It is hardly a half truth. It should be supplemented by an emphatic statement that the author was far more consumed with zeal for the saving of the souls of the men and women of Ephesus, than for the construction of an elaborate and precise theology. Direct appeals to Christian living, appeals stated not in terms of any "theology," but in the simple words of their own daily thinking and living, reveal his heart's desire.

7. John thus preferred to express his message in concrete terms taken from the life of Ephesus and from the familiar parts of the Old Testament. His message, as stated before, was that "belief in him" obtains for any man the Light of true knowledge which enables him to live the Life more abundant. These are words of everyday living, Light, Life, Belief in him.

In bringing home this message to his people John used simple illustrations. He describes a wedding scene (John ii) and a birth (John iii); he talks about the best kind of water for drinking (John iv), the best food for eating (John vi), the cure for blindness (John ix). His use of these as symbols of spiritual truth was even more readily understood in those days than in modern times.

An American monthly magazine, near the top of the list in number of copies sold, which never mentions religion or has any religious or moral interest, constantly addresses talks to its readers like the following: "Many of the readers of this publication have written us, after having put into practice some of our principles, that their experience was like being born again. They were actually born into a new life, physically and mentally everything was different. They became broader, more capable, more stable. They had come out of a narrowed existence into the full-

ness of life. . . . There are various degrees of life. Many people are practically dead, many years before they reach their last resting place. . . . If you have been living the old life, hampered by the conventional principles, come out into the sunshine . . . then life will mean something. It will be full to the very brim every day. You will be spurred on to do your best work. You will be stimulated at times almost to the point of intoxication. . . . If you would be born again into this new life, give our principles a trial. . . . Try it and be convinced." Birth, new life, fullness of life, death, resting place, tomb, sunshine, light, intoxication are all words of popular daily experience. They are all used directly or indirectly by John. "Try it and be convinced" parallels John's repeated "Come and see" (i, 39, and elsewhere).

8. The catacombs of Rome show the extent of the popularity of John's pictures. A book by C. D. Lamberton entitled "Themes from St. John's Gospel in Early Roman Catacomb Painting" divides the themes treated into three classes. The first list, which is made up of the pictures based upon narratives found only in John's Gospel, includes the Raising of Lazarus, which heads the whole list; second, the Woman of Samaria; third, the Marriage at Cana. The second classification is made up of pictures which are found both in John and elsewhere in Scripture. Among these are the Healing of the Paralytic, the Lamb of God, the Breakfast by the Sea. Certain details in these pictures, however, show that John has been followed rather than other Scripture. In a third classification is a considerable list of pictures "characteristically Johannine," The Eucharist (in connection with the Feeding of the Multitude), the Baptism, the Vine and Branches, the Good Shepherd, the Living Water, and others. "St. John's Gospel," says Lamberton, "was the leading factor in the entire field of catacomb symbolism" (p. 101).

9. Another bit of evidence to show that the Gospel of John is thus composed of religious appeals expressed in

popular language and illustration is the fact they may be called and have been called "sermons" (Burton, Short Introduction to the Gospels, p. 128). Each chapter in the first part of the Gospel is suggestive of a separate sermon. The chapters do not form logical parts of a single discussion, but stand related to each other only as a series of religious talks might be related. The order of the sermons is determined by the nature of their subjects rather than by chronological sequence of citation from Jesus' ministry. To read one of these religious appeals understandingly it is necessary to imagine that you are hearing it preached to an Ephesian audience, and that the main message of the talk is all that you can expect to capture and retain.

For it is quite apparent that we do not have the sermons complete. As it takes only three to five minutes to read the words, they can form no more than the framework of an entire discourse. It is perhaps too venturesome to try to understand the exact relation of the written Gospel to the oral addresses. Yet, as a working basis, each chapter may be treated as the set of notes which the author prepared in advance of the delivery of the talk. Taken even as notes they are extremely abbreviated, the bare suggestions of the symbols and explanations which the author in speaking would give at considerable length. A good example of what we mean is the sentence, "He spoke of the temple of his body" (ii, 21).

Probably the author had been preaching many years in Ephesus before the idea occurred to him of collecting these sermons into a single scroll or book. Toward the close of his ministry when he sorted out the material that could be crowded within the limits of one book, there was not room enough to reproduce complete sermons and he had to content himself with a few touches which would give a certain coherence and smoothness to the work as a whole. The collection was not widely circulated until the death of the author, at which time the appendix was added

by the editor who prepared the whole work for general use.

The order in which the sermons follow one another presents a problem which has never been satisfactorily solved. One explanation offered is that the leaves of the Gospel were picked up after they had been blown about and disarranged by some accident in the early days and the present order is thus largely the result of chance! Possibly to regard the order in which they appear as an order logical enough for a series of sermon subjects furnishes a solution. After the introductory chapter comes the sermon on marriage (chap. ii); second, the sermon on birth (chap. iii); third, on water to drink (chap. iv); fourth, on sickness and health (chap. v); fifth, on food to eat (chap. vi); sixth, on blindness and its cure. More will be said concerning the order of this material in our comments on the various chapters. Suffice it to say here that if the Gospel is made up of sermons we may expect to find each chapter or section in the main an independent unit.

10. These sermons originally preached by John in Ephesus have become the most popular and most widely read religious literature in the world. The walls of the catacombs tell the story of their appeal in the ancient day. The place of the Beloved Disciple and of the principal scenes of the Gospel in the history of painting and of sculpture continues the story. Quotations from it in use on every hand tell us daily the same thing.

Letters of inquiry were recently sent to a wide circle of Christian leaders. Ministers in large churches and in small showed a fine spirit of coöperation in presenting to their people, old and young, the questions submitted. "Which of the books of the New Testament do you love best?" "Which of the gospels do you find most helpful?" Answers to the questions concerning the gospels that numbered twenty-five per cent of the total in favor of John would mean that the Fourth Gospel is as popular as any one of the other three. But the returns showed the aston-

ishingly large percentage of about ninety in favor of the Gospel of John as the most helpful and widely read and best liked of the books of the New Testament.

Contrast with this the fact that there is no recent English commentary on the Gospel of John, none which brings to bear on its interpretation the great volume of modern scholarly discovery and historical reconstruction. How is it that so many college men even feel that they can well afford to go without any modern information on the Christian Testament. Not long ago a college graduate in the midst of his seminary course was advised to take up the study of John. His exact reply was: "I have never ventured very far into the metaphysics of the Fourth Gospel and I do not care to do so now." An educated man ought to see in the spectacle of the love of millions of people for the Gospel of John a fact of overwhelming significance. Only fundamental value in a book can account for such popular favor.

Amid the theological disturbances of recent years the slogan "Back to Jesus" has met with wide acceptance among historically trained religious leaders. The slogan is a good one, but like any good slogan carelessly employed may prove misleading. There can be no dispute that Mark is the earliest and John the latest gospel. If chronological precedence is to decide, according to the slogan, then Mark takes first place and John last place. In the coming years, however, Jesus' words may again be fulfilled, that the first shall be last and the last first, if Christianity continues to be a religion of the people, and the Gospel a part of the daily life of man.

For the Gospel of John thus to come into its own, it must be read with an appreciation of its historical character and quality by hosts of Christian people who are unable to do so today. The purpose of the following pages is to form a happy union between the historical spirit of inquiry and an appreciation of the beauty, power, and charm of the Fourth Gospel.

CHAPTER IV

THE PROLOGUE

JOHN I, 1-18

1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was divine. 2. The Word existed in the beginning with God. 3. All things came into being through the Word, and nothing came to pass apart from him. 4. In him was life; and that life was the light of men. 5. The light is shining in the darkness, and the darkness has never overcome it.

6. There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John. 7. He came as a witness, to bear witness to the light, in order that every one might believe.

8. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light. 9. The real light which enlightens every man was coming into the world. 10. He was in the world, and though the world came into being through him, the world did not recognize him. 11. He came into his own world and his own kin did not give him a welcome. 12. But to all who did receive him and believe in him he gave the right to become children of God, 13. who owe their new birth not to nature or to human or physical impulse, but to God.

14. The Word was embodied in a human life, and lived among us. And we saw the beauty and power of his life, the heritage of an only son from his father, full of appeal and conviction. 15. (John testified concerning him; John is the one who said: The Coming One, though he comes after me, is yet before me, for he was ever first.) 16. For out of his abundance we have all received, bless-

ing after blessing. 17. For while the law was given through Moses, blessing and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18. No one has ever seen God, but an only Son of the Father's heart has revealed him to us.

The first eighteen verses are related to the rest of the Gospel as a preface is to a book, and are a part of it in the sense that the opening bars that contain the composer's theme are part of a musical production. Many a study of the Fourth Gospel in its treatment of the prologue gives an unwarrantedly peculiar impression of the book as a whole.[1] The Gospel really consists of a collection of talks or discourses expressed in simple graphic language for popular consumption. The prologue forms no part of the first talk nor of any other.

The purpose of the prologue is to win the attention of a Greek reader to a gospel of Jewish origin. It is a bridge from Ephesus to Palestine. It connects two worlds of thought, the Occidental and the Oriental. The Greek believed that the universe is the result of an evolution. To be sure he did not reach that conclusion by the road of Darwin's idea of the differentiation of species, nor did he dream that the world is a revolving sphere. But the ancient Greek did have his ideas of atoms and cyclic storms of whirling atoms out of which the world has come. In contrast, the Jew believed that Jehovah created the world by a gesture of his sovereign will. Again, the Greek's conception of God was less personal than the Jew's. The Jew believed that Jehovah personally directs human affairs, sends his angels to earth and his Messiah, and will one day overturn and change and reorganize the world. The proposal of the prologue is in general a very simple one. It concedes to the Greek his idea that God is an invisible spirit and then lays out its whole strength to persuade him to concede that this invisible spirit entered into Jesus and through Jesus revealed a beneficent love as the

[1] Cf. Gardner, p. 312, note.

highest principle of life and the inmost power within the wheels of the universe.

This idea that the prologue makes concessions to and pleads for concessions from Greek popular philosophy is stated by Gardner as follows: "It is notable that the Evangelist brings in his sentences about the Logos as if he were stating something very simple and undisputed. . . . He takes for granted a scheme of philosophy at the time current at Ephesus. . . . The originality of the Evangelist (in the eyes of his Greek hearers) lies, not in a new theory of the Logos, but in his conception of the embodiment of the eternal Word in the person of the Founder of Christianity."[2]

This proposition which the author puts forth, that the divine Spirit dwelt with all its fullness in Jesus, was particularly easy of apprehension for the Greek in the way in which our author states it because it fitted right into the framework of the accepted Stoic philosophy. This philosophy which was distantly related to Platonic dualism took the stand that every man has in him a spark of the divine Spirit which guides all things. According to it, man is the combination of two elements, the flesh and the divine reason implanted in him. Thus the announcement that Jesus was the incarnation of the divine Spirit in all its fullness would be readily understood in connection with the natural intellectual training and environment of the Greek.

"In the beginning was the Word" (i, 1). That the expression "Word" or "Logos" had not previously been used as a distinctively Christian term at the time this Gospel was written is evident from the fact that it does not occur anywhere else in this Gospel outside the prologue, nor anywhere else in the New Testament in this sense. The nearest parallel is the phrase "The word of God" in Revelation xix, 13 (*cf.*, I John i, 1; Heb. iv, 12). It is, therefore, necessary to go outside the Christian re-

[2] Pp. 314-316.

ligion to understand its meaning, into the popular philosophy of the period. His use of the expression must not be misconstrued to mean that the author of the Gospel was a philosopher or interested in metaphysics. The term was a popular one, just as "evolution" is today. It would be as much out of place to call a man a scientist because "evolution" formed part of his vocabulary as it would be to call the Fourth Gospel philosophical or metaphysical because of the use of the term "Word."

Light on what he means by the term will be thrown by a study of two lines of thought, the one represented by Heraclitus, Plato and the Stoics, the other represented by Philo. The philosophy of Heraclitus, to which Platonic dualism was somewhat related, became the basis of the most popular teaching in the first century, which was Stoicism. Early Greek philosophers (*cf.*, also the later teaching of Epicurus) had explained the world as an aggregation and adaptation of physical elements, a purely materialistic basis. Heraclitus, a philosopher of Ephesus, the city where John's Gospel was written, who lived about five centuries before Christ, argued that to the physical elements we must add an element of reason to explain the origin and progress of the world truly. Plato and his followers later, in developing a somewhat similar idea, drew a sharp distinction and cleavage between the physical realm and the reason or ideal, a doctrine which is now known as Platonic dualism. On the one hand was a world of material things distinct and inferior and separate. And on the other hand was a world of ideas and ideals equally distinct and superior and separate. This spirit world corresponded to the term "God." But it was for Plato an absentee and not an immanent God indwelling in men, a supreme and immaterial ideal toward which men might strive in their struggle to escape from their captivity in the material.

The Stoics, in the centuries just preceding the time of Christ, made philosophy more practical as a guide of daily living. They did this by combining Plato's dualistic

philosophy with the earlier idea of Heraclitus that the Reason or Logos which guides the world is immanent in all things and then carrying this last thought a step further. If this immanent Reason pervades all things, it is present also in man. Man's reason is its expression. There is, therefore, a spark of the Divine Reason in each one of us.

Stoics explained all life and the world and the universe by saying that there are two elemental factors, an inferior world of material and a spiritual world which they called God. The human spirit belongs to the spiritual world; the body to the material. This practical dualism explains why life is such an inveterate conflict. It is a constant battle between the two, the higher and the lower. The human spirit ever feels its kinship with the divine from which it proceeded. "We are his offspring" is the phrase which Paul quoted at Athens (Acts xvii, 28). We are "fragments of God" is an expression which Epictetus used.

In the time of Jesus a man named Philo lived in Alexandria who was a Jew by blood but a Greek in language and environment, and his books were written in Greek. He made it his life purpose to mediate between the Old Testament ideas of God and the prevailing Hellenistic ideas of God of his day. The high ethical ideals of the Jewish religion and its moral God appealed strongly to the Mediterranean civilization, but Greek-minded men could not believe that God "spoke" to the prophets or that he created the world in six days. Philo made the one world of thought feel at home in the other by finding a word with two kindred meanings, the one fitted to contain the Hebrew teaching, and the other the Greek ideas.

"Logos" was the term thus discovered or rather adopted by him. It had two usages, both well established. The one sprang from the close connection of the word with the common verb "to speak" or "to say." This usage is very frequent in the Greek Old Testament, which was Philo's Bible. It is found in such passages as "The word

of Jehovah came unto'' the prophet (Hosea i, 1; I Kings xii, 22). That usage is also very common in the New Testament.

The other usage was just as natural and easy to understand; from it we get our English derivative, ''logic.'' In this sense of ''reason'' the word serves as a strong cable in Philo's handling with the ''reason'' which Heraclitus and especially the Stoics taught was the guiding Power of all creation and all life. It was the exact term current in the popular Stoicism of Jesus' time.[3] Philo's great contribution to the syncretistic philosophy of the day consisted in this combination of Oriental religion and Greek philosophy which he effected by the use to which he put this double usage of the term ''logos.'' He maintained that wherever the Old Testament speaks of the word (logos) of God the reference is to that divine power which the Greeks call Reason (Logos). That pointed a way by which any believer in Greek philosophy might find it written into every part of the Old Testament and every Jew might feel that his ancestral religion was in harmony with the general philosophy of the Empire.

With these two meanings of the term ''Word'' in mind, one further comment is needed for the interpretation of the first verse of the prologue. In the common English translation the word ''God'' occurs twice, but while in the first case the use of the noun, God, is proper, in the second case a different form in the Greek is used which is practically an adjective. The author uses the first form when he means the personal God and the word might then for a Jew be translated ''Jehovah.'' The author uses the second form to emphasize the quality rightly attributable to God and it might for both Jew and Greek, but especially for the Greek, then be translated ''divine'' or ''essentially God.'' The meaning of the verse then becomes plain and simple. It is in three parts: (a) It concedes to the Greek his conviction that from the beginning Reason

[3] Case, p. 263.

has ruled the world but claims that this concession sets up no conflict with the idea of a personal God; that (b) both ideas may co-exist side by side, and that (c) God may and does correspond to both the Jewish Jehovah and the Greek Reason. (a) In the beginning was the Logos, and (b) the Logos existed along with God, and (c) the Logos, essentially speaking, was God.

A famous passage in Goethe's Faust is full of suggestion in explaining the meaning of the word "logos." The theological student is brooding over his text and commentaries to get the right equivalent of this word "logos." First he translates it "Word," then "Thought" or "Mind," then "Power," then "Act" or "Action." It would not be far wrong to say that something of all four (Wort, Sinn, Kraft, Tat) entered into the most ancient usage.

'T is written: "In the beginning was the *Word!*"
Here am I balked: who now can help afford?
The *Word?*—Impossible so high to rate it;
And otherwise must I translate it.
If by the Spirit I am truly taught,
Then thus: "In the Beginning was the *Thought.*"
This first line let me weigh completely,
Lest my impatient pen proceed too fleetly.
Is it the Thought which works, creates, indeed?
"In the Beginning was the *Power*," I read.
Yet, as I write, a warning is suggested,
That I the sense may not have fairly tested.
The Spirit aids me: now I see the light!
"In the Beginning was the *Act*," I write.

(Faust I, Scene iii. Tr. by Bayard Taylor.)

The purport of the remaining portions of the prologue follow easily. "All things came into being through him" (3) is a concession to the Greek idea that reason which remains to energize and administer rather than a single stark executive act of God, soon over, is the final explanation of all phenomena. The reading is in line with Philo's interpretation of the first chapter of Genesis. From such a passage as "God said: Let there be light; and there

was light'' Philo argued that it was the ''word'' (''God said'') the ''logos'' in the Greek sense of reason, which produced the light which made and kept all things from going dead.

In interpreting the worship of Osiris, Plutarch, a contemporary of John, says in similar fashion that in his person Osiris represents the ''Logos'' and in his Logos-function instituted the rational world.[4]

''In him was life and the life was the light of men'' (4) is in line again with the Greek teaching that reason is the vital spark of all life and like an invisible sun, it shines away in the darkness of superstition and ignorance for the purpose of showing men the way out.

The author goes on to explain (9) that the true reason which is the light of every man ever born was coming into the world in a more direct way than ever before. It had always been in the world (10) and was, as the Greeks held, the explanation of all things in the world, but the world in general had never taken anything like full advantage of its offer to supply men light and life. Then, wonderful to relate, it came to such clear expression in our day (14) in one single life that common people upon acquaintance with that man recognize the glory and loveliness of the revelation. As an only son peculiarly represents his earthly father, he is the only man who has given an adequately true idea of what his father is like. In spite of some passages to the contrary in the Old Testament, Christians are quite ready to concede that no one (18) has seen God at any time; but they believe that Jesus is the only true son and bosom companion of his father who has taken full advantage of the light and life which ''the Logos'' offers to men.

To give an insight into the meaning of John's first sentences for the average Greek of Ephesus they should be translated somewhat as follows:

i, 1. From the beginning there has been reason in all

[4] Case, p. 321.

things, guiding and directing them. Reason has dwelt with God. Reason was, essentially speaking, God. 2. This Reason existed from the beginning with God. 3. All things came into being through a vital spark imparted by Reason and nothing ever happened without reason having the upper hand in it.

4. Reason has been the source of such light of life or reason as men have taken advantage of and used. Its light is shining in earth's darkness, and the darkness has never overcome it.

9. The source of all the light which the human race has ever used was (in the time of John) making a new invasion into the world of men. 10. It had always been shining away in the world, and the world came into being through it, but the world had never half-recognized or made use of its supplies of light and life. 11. So now when it had come personally into the world (of men) which was akin to it, men, although they were its kindred, did not understand it, nor accept it. 14. To be specific, the divine Reason took on human form, embodied itself in a human life, and lived among us so visibly that we cannot help but recognize its beauty—a beauty as closely related to God as only a true son is to a father—compact of appeal and conviction.

18. It is still true that no one has ever seen God. But Jesus, like that one only of his sons who is the express image of his earthly father, has revealed him to us.

CHAPTER V

JOHN THE BAPTIST AND JESUS

JOHN I, 19-51

In the collection of religious talks gathered together at the close of the author's long ministry in Ephesus the first one puts an emphasis on the contrast between John the Baptist and Jesus. It comes first in the collection because it logically belongs there, since it deals with the relation of Christianity to its ancestral religion, Judaism. The purpose of the discourse is to make clear to its Ephesian audience why it is better to join the Christian Church than the Jewish Synagogue or the Church of John the Baptist. It is this immediate denominational purpose which gives to this chapter the vital power which has been felt by its readers in every age. The talk as it was given by him orally is of course not reproduced in full. The chapter is to be regarded as a brief digest, or, better still, as a page or two of personal notes which a speaker makes for his own use as a basis for an oral address.

The author makes his points both with reference to Judaism in general, and also, as just suggested, with particular reference to the reformed Judaism of the Church of John the Baptist. A sect of John the Baptist existed as a distinct religious body down to the third century. There are many references to it in early Christian literature. The clearest of these is in Acts xviii and xix. In xviii, 25, Apollos at Ephesus is described as "knowing only the baptism of John." Jesus was regarded by this sect as John's most brilliant disciple. John, its leader and founder, however, was the Messiah or "the Prophet." The

religion of the disciples of John was highly ethical, similar in many ways to the historic Judaism of the prophets, but, like historic Judaism, it lacked the teaching of an indwelling divine spirit to supplement and remedy the powerlessness of men otherwise to live up to the Law. It seems to have laid great stress upon a future Day of Judgment and the punishment then to be visited upon all sinners.

JOHN THE BAPTIST

JOHN 1, 19-28

19. And this is the testimony of John when the Jews sent priests and Levites to ask him, Who are you? 20. And he confessed and did not deny; and he confessed, I am not the Christ. 21. And they asked him, What then? Are you Elijah? And he says, I am not. Are you the prophet? And he answered, No. 22. Then they said to him, Who are you? Tell us, for we must have some answer to give to those who sent us. What do you claim for yourself? 23. He said, I am a voice of one calling in the desert: Make ready the way of the Lord. 24. And these men had been sent as representatives of the Pharisees.

25. And they asked him, Why then are you baptizing, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet? 26. John answered, I am baptizing with water; but there is some one standing among you whom you do not know. 27. The one who is to come after me, whose shoe I am not worthy to undo. 28. This took place at Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

The first part of the talk comparing John and Jesus is primarily a picture of John. The outstanding characteristic is its negative attitude toward the Baptist. As a whole the painting is a study in contrast. In this first part every stroke of the artist's brush produces a shadowy and diminutive effect. The high point of the paragraph is reached in verse 23, where the author brings in a quotation verbatim from the Gospel of Mark in defense of his

thesis that the Baptist was nobody at all, but only a voice, only a "sound of calling in a country place."

The phrase "this is" (19) shows at once that what follows is cited as corroborative evidence. The delegation of Pharisees is an official one; no doubt can be cast upon the report of its findings. In verse 20 we read that John the Baptist "confessed" (as if he were undergoing a grilling); then that he "did not deny"; and still again that he made confession. The threefold emphasis suggests incidentally the touch and go of public speech before a popular audience. But it is primarily testimony to the frontal attack which the author is making upon the members of the sect of John the Baptist in Ephesus who proclaimed John to be the great religious reformer and Jesus only his most brilliant disciple. John's abject confession here is not much in line with the open, defiant, masculine attitude of the John portrayed in Matthew and Luke. It turns out to be simply a flat admission that he was not the Messiah. The citation of this confession from the Baptist's own lips leaves his followers in Ephesus not a leg on which to stand.

The mention of Elijah and "the prophet" in verse 21 should probably not be taken as indicating a gradation or variation in the rank given to John the Baptist among his followers. Many who expected the inauguration of the Messianic kingdom expected it would take place without the appearance of any personal Messiah. Some expected Elijah, some expected only the rise of another in the long line of succession of the prophets, to announce the kingdom. The three terms Christ, Elijah, "the prophet" do represent three lessening degrees of rank, and are in accord with the author's purpose of diminishing the Baptist's importance. But it is probable that for the followers of John the three terms simply correspond to different ideas which all agreed in this: that the Baptist was the supreme figure in the new dispensation. By the confession of the Baptist's own lips, this is not so says our author.

Verse 22 again becomes most vividly apropos in the same Ephesus connection. If that be the case, the speaker must provide his Ephesian audience with "an answer" for those who ask for some explanation of the greatness attributed to John. He is able to clinch his case by a direct quotation from the accepted Christian gospels, showing that the Baptist only claimed to be "a voice of one calling in a desert place" on the men of his time to be prepared to give Jesus the right reception when he should come (*cf.*, Mar. i, 3). The figure of the masculine John of Mark's Gospel, so mighty when compared with other men, we have his own word for it, is as nothing compared to the majesty of Jesus.

Verse 24, which is practically a repetition of the similar statement in verse 19, is repeated to show that the Baptist's words in regard to his rank compared with Jesus were uttered officially and were no mere casual expression of modesty.

The next denominational argument which would be advanced in Ephesus in favor of the religion of John the Baptist by its members concerned the rite of baptism. Was not baptism the distinctive feature of the new religion from Palestine? Whoever instituted baptism must be its founder. John the Baptist instituted baptism and, therefore, he was the founder. So the argument would run. What is the answer of the Christians of Ephesus to this argument? The author makes immediate and challenging reply, "John answered them, I baptize with water." He postpones the completion of the antithesis which he has in mind to the following paragraph (33). This art of one thing at a time is characteristic of the Gospel and one of its elements of power. All the author intimates here is that mere water is only one form of baptism and a patently inferior one.

Then, the author proceeds to sketch in the picture with touches that are to give added clearness and distinctness to the contrasting form of baptism which he is soon to

present. "There is one standing among you." The word "standing" carries the force of towering and dominating possessed by a mountain wall seen from the valley below. We have it on the authority of the Baptist's own lips that "he is not worthy to unloose the shoe latchet of his Lord." The author is able again to quote his words from the Markan Gospel.

Another detail which makes for increased definiteness and vividness is the statement of the locality. All this happened at "Bethany across the Jordan." The fact that the exact location meant by him has become uncertain in the centuries since does not detract from the added concreteness which it imparted to the picture for its immediate audience.

THE LAMB OF GOD

JOHN I, 29-34

29. The next day he sees Jesus coming and says, There is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. 30. This is the man of whom I said, After me there is coming a man who is even now before me: for he was ever first. 31. And I did not know him myself; but it is in order that he should be made known to Israel that I came baptizing with water. 32. And John testified, I saw the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven; and it remained upon him. 33. He is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. 34. He is the Son of God.

Verses 29-34 compose the second section in which first place is given to Jesus. It is a picture of a great and massive Jesus and beside him a diminutive and shadowy John. If we regard the paragraph 19-28 as constituting one side of the picture, let us say the left side, then the present paragraph forms the center and the next paragraph the right of the canvas. All blend together as a baptism scene. It is more really a scene than a narrative succession of events. Nowhere is it stated or the least hint

given that Jesus was ever baptized. Godet says the baptism must have preceded verse 29. Yet the preceding verses contain no suggestion of it. It is in verses 29-34 that we have the heart of the painting of the baptism for our author. Reference would be made to it here if anywhere; but such a narrative of events is not the present purpose.

"The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." It is unfortunate that the word lamb conveys to a modern American so little of the peculiar meanings which it possessed for a pastoral people. Modern missionaries have made desperate and very limitedly successful attempts to recover for us the meaning of the phrase. Grenfell's use in his Labrador work of the expression "the young seal of God" demonstrates the impossibility of transplanting such expressions to lands where they are not indigenous. "The young seal of God" seems so incongruous to us as to be an affront to Jesus. Alaskan ministers have almost insuperable difficulty with the parable of the lost sheep, and have found it necessary to make substitutions more in accord with the life of the people to whom they are ministering.

Such illustrations bear testimony to the fact that the phrase "lamb of God" once had a significance quite apart from its literal meaning. All commentators are agreed, however, that the primary reference of that old significance was not to the sacrificial system of the Jews. All refer it rather to the song of the Servant of Jehovah in Isaiah lii, 13-liii, 12, where the Servant in his humiliation is likened to a "lamb" (liii, 7).

Professor Moore has shown that there is no case in Hebrew ritual in which a dying lamb is thought of as bearing the sin of the people and vicariously suffering for the people (in the article on Sacrifice in the Encyclopedia Biblica). Two facts may be taken as fairly well established. (1) The Gospel of John puts far more emphasis on the life of Jesus than on the death. (2) Isaiah liii was

written with reference first of all to the nation of Israel suffering in captivity. The nation personified as the Servant of Jehovah could not die except in a figurative sense; for the prophet believed that Israel would endure to the end.

He "takes away the sin of the world." The old translation read "beareth the sin of the world" and is partly responsible for a too theological understanding of these words. He takes away, bears away, *i.e.*, removes the sins of the world as a gardener uproots and removes the weeds of his garden. The results are similar; the processes when we spell out the comparisons are, also, similar. The gardener acts as the Intermediary and the barrow and the hoe may be said to do the work. So, also, Jesus is the Intermediary, and the Light and Life imparted by the Logos, the active agency of removal. The author of this Gospel is always mindful of the immediate, practical, concrete significance of what he says. There is no doubt that his reference is to the fact that "belief on Jesus" was reclaiming men and women daily in Ephesus from habits of immorality, from anger and jealousy, and from the fruits of the flesh in general. Every day in Ephesus some man found it to be true that "belief on Jesus" could "take away" sins of his that had always stuck closer to him than a brother and thus liberate and enable him to realize his capacities for a higher existence.

Verse 30 is the cross reference to verse 27, which joins this paragraph with the preceding. Then in the verses following the contrast is dwelt upon between the old baptism with water practised by the Jews, and the new and higher distinctively Christian baptism which the author portrays.

There is a way of applying the microscope to these verses, and making verse 31 mean that the work of reformation of the Baptist in Israel was as nothing in his eyes compared to his mission to point out the coming Messiah. This would be in line with the author's picture of

the Baptist. There is no need, however, to go as far as that.

It should be noted that the author here seems to take over the view which had considerable popularity in the early church that Jesus was a man until at Baptism God "adopted" him by descending and becoming incarnate in him. In reality the author probably thought of Jesus as from his birth the incarnation of the preëxistent and ever-existent Spirit of God. But this culminating incident of the descent of the Spirit which occurred in connection with the baptism received by Jesus at the hands of John to which this Gospel never refers is of great value to our author in bringing out his views of the office of the Holy Spirit.

The contrast between water baptism as practised by the sect of the Baptist and spirit baptism as practised among Christians is well described in a passage in the Book of Acts (xviii, 24-xix, 7). Apollos was an eloquent man and well trained in the Scriptures, "knowing only the baptism of John." Paul came to Ephesus and found disciples won by Apollos into membership in the sect of John the Baptist; and he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "We did not even hear that there is a Holy Spirit." And when they had listened to Paul's explanation they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus, "and when Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them."

Here the Gospel of John presents the same view of what transpires at baptism as that of Acts just related. Luke says the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form as a dove, but John puts the emphasis upon the invisible Spirit. His aim was to make a Christian convert of any one in Ephesus undecided whether to join the sect of the Baptist or that of Jesus. Jordan's stream and Jewish purifications and water baptism exercise a beneficial effect in purifying the soul, but one not to be compared with the Spirit of God, coming down out of Heaven and abiding

upon Jesus, who has become for us the Son of God, who baptizes us with the fire of the Holy Spirit which bestows upon us the life eternal.

THE TWO DISCIPLES
JOHN I, 35-42

35. Again the next day John was standing with two of his disciples; 36. And seeing Jesus, he says, There is the Lamb of God. 37. And the two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. 38. And Jesus, turning, says to them, What do you seek? And they said to him, Rabbi (which means Teacher), where are you staying? 39. He says to them, Come, and you will see. So they came and saw where he abode; and they abode with him that day; it was about four in the afternoon. 40. One of the two was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. 41. He at once finds his own brother Simon, and says to him, We have found the Messiah (which means Christ). 42. He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, You are Simon: you shall be called Cephas (which is Hebrew for Peter and means Rock).

Verses 35-42 make up the third section of the picture. As 19-28 painted the Baptist and 29-34 portrayed Jesus, so these verses picture John in the actual act of encouraging his disciples to leave him and turn to Jesus. It forms a counterpart of that scene in the Book of Acts where a number of John's disciples in Ephesus were won over to the Church of Jesus. It graphically represents what our author or speaker wishes to bring to pass among his own hearers.

The words "Again the next day" are not so much an indication of time in a narrative as of a point of transition in an argument or plea. Here stand two of John's disciples. They are not pictured as looking first at John and then at Jesus and deciding that Jesus is the one to follow. It is the Baptist himself who points his disciples

to Jesus. There can be no uncertainty left. Whether the Ephesian listener has the Gospel of Mark quoted so pointedly in the present chapter to read, or depends upon the present speaker, he will find there is no excuse for any man or woman of Ephesus to attend the church of the Baptist—the Baptist himself pointed his disciples to Jesus.

"There is the Lamb of God." Just as section two was linked to section one by the repetition of a characteristic phrase, so the final one of the three sections is linked to the preceding by the repetition of this outstanding expression. All goes to form one great unity. "What do you seek?" (38) is a question of largest significance in relation to the immediate Ephesian situation. In Ephesus, as in Athens, men were "seeking God" (Acts xvii, 27), if haply they might find him and know where he abides. He is, as the passage in Acts continues, "not far from each one of us," and the simple answer to the Ephesian searcher is "Come (with us) and See." That answer has been repeated in every Christian church in every age, it is the answer hung in the window of many a Christian Mission, it is the answer of Christian experience, "Come and See." And they came and saw where he abode; and they abode with him. This is the pattern again of the result that follows on acceptance of the Christian invitation in Ephesus and elsewhere. "Abide" is one of the large words of the Gospel; "Abide in me and I in you" (xv, 4-10; xiv, 23).

Perhaps the evangelist gave this invitation at an afternoon service in Ephesus and that gave a solemn emphasis to his appeal when he added, "It was about four in the afternoon." Study of first century customs makes it appear that this was just the hour at which a Christian talk might be delivered. There was then no Christian legal holiday corresponding to our Sunday, and its morning hours were usually given over to work. The afternoon hour before sunset, after the heat of the day, was the most convenient time for a religious service.

Verses 40-42 recounted another event which the speaker hoped to find echoed in Ephesian Christian experience. How often it happens that a very simple, almost unknown Christian becomes the instrument in God's hand for bringing to Jesus some brother who becomes a great leader! Every great preacher can recall the influence of some disciple unknown to the world in turning him toward the Christ. It is a type of the mighty and constant service to the Cause rendered by the man or woman who can never hope to be great. It was so in Ephesus. Our author makes a potent appeal of it. The insignificant Andrew brought the great Simon Peter. The most humble listener in the Ephesian audience can do as much. It is this missionary spirit which made the Church of Jesus grow.

This paragraph, 35-42, like other sections, is full of instances of the author's popular style of speech. Note the repeated use of "and" in verses 37-39. Note also the change in tense of verbs and the frequent use of the historical present. The translation of the word "Rabbi" in verse 38 shows in the first place that the author had distinctly non-Jewish people in his audience. Likewise, in verse 41 the translation of the word "Messiah" may be understood in the same way, and in verse 42 the translation of the name "Cephas." Another indication of his popular style is the occurrence of what might be called a genuine colloquialism in verse 41. The word "own" has always been a puzzle to exegetes. No one else is referred to who has a brother named Simon in this passage. The word "own" has always seemed superfluous. Westcott says: "The words imply that some one else was afterwards found. . . . We may conclude that this was the brother of the second disciple." It is one of many cases in which the papyri have altered our idea of the meaning of a word. In the papyri we find the word "own" occurs frequently in colloquial dialect[1] and is nothing more nor

[1] Deissmann, *Licht vom Osten* 4, p. 138, note 1; *Light from the Ancient East*, III, 3, 5, note; also Deissmann, *Bible Studies*.

less than a duplication corresponding to the double negative or to such an expression as "perfectly all right." It is a precious bit of evidence for the colloquial style of our author.

JESUS AND THE GUILELESS JEW

JOHN I, 43-51

43. The next day Jesus finds Philip; and he says to him, Follow me. 44. Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 45. Philip finds Nathanael, and says to him, We have found the one about whom Moses and the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. 46. And Nathanael said, Can anything good come out of Nazareth? Philip says to him, Come and see. 47. Jesus saw Nathanael coming and says, Here is a true Israelite in whom there is no guile! 48. Nathanael says, How do you know me? Jesus answered, Before Philip called you, when you were still under the fig tree, I saw you. 49. Nathanael answered, Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are King of Israel. 50. Jesus answered, Do you believe in me because I told you I saw you under the fig tree? You shall see greater things than these. 51. Verily, verily, I say to you, you shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.

In Ephesus the question: What is the difference between perfect Judaism and Christianity had to be faced frequently in personal interviews. Paul used to answer this question by saying that no one can be a perfect Jew, no one can perfectly keep the law; therefore, God had to reveal another way of salvation. Our author answers it in his own different, characteristic way. He shows a Jew who was guileless talking with Jesus and presents Jesus himself giving the answer.

"The next day" (43) is the notice that we are passing another transition point in the continuing argument. In

verse 44 the mention of Andrew and Peter links this paragraph to the preceding. In verse 45 Philip's finding of Nathanael is another picture of the Christian way of bringing some one—this time a Jew loyal to his Judaism—to Jesus.

It it somewhat difficult to understand why the author speaks of Jesus as the "son of Joseph" (45) not only here but elsewhere in the Gospel (*cf.*, vi, 42). It is possible that the author found a certain inconsistency for his own thought in the two ideas of preëxistence and virgin birth. A virgin birth for Jesus is never referred to nor is any convert-making use ever made of it by him. Certain it is that any reference to a virgin birth for Jesus would constitute a stumbling-block and not a stepping-stone to a Jew hitherto loyal to his Judaism, who was trying to make up his mind to cross over into membership in the Christian church.

The question (46) "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" again acquires its largest significance when thought of as addressed in the Ephesian situation to Jews wavering between loyalty to the synagogue down the street and the adoption of the name of Christian. Nazareth was an unknown place. Yet this author is asking Jews in Ephesus to believe in a man from Nazareth as their Savior. They would be thinking of Jerusalem as the only spot to which God would send the Messiah. A Gentile would think first of Rome. The same negative attitude is in the mind of a modern man when he asks why he should put his faith in an Oriental teacher who lived two thousand years ago. The answer which the author of this Gospel gives is again the challenge of the Christian experience "Come and See."

Nathanael is an Israelite in whom there is none of the pretense and hypocrisy ascribed to the Pharisees of Jerusalem in the other Gospels (Mat. vi, 2, 5, 16). Our author is drawing a picture of what takes place when Jesus and a perfect Jew stand face to face. It reminds

us of the scene of the rich young ruler who had kept "all these things from his youth up." Jesus' heart goes out to the perfect Israelite. Christianity in Ephesus is willing, also, to give all credit to a faithful worshiper of another religion. Jesus can see through the heart of every man or woman in Ephesus. Such was John's suggestion. This insight was not considered by our author as a sign or miracle because he expressly describes an incident related in the next chapter as the first sign which Jesus showed. The confession of Nathanael is intended to be representative; every one who is completely religious in his life, Jew or Gentile, will recognize in Jesus, once he will let himself be persuaded to make his acquaintance, the revelation of God. Nathanael's confession, therefore, like so many other statements in the Gospel, is in both Greek and Jewish form. "Son of God" is more intelligible to the Greek; "King of Israel" to the Jew.

In the next verses, 50, 51, the subject of the relation of Christianity to Judaism is continued. The Christian religion gives full credit to the good in any Nathanael and any Nathanael must of himself recognize in Jesus the greatest Rabbi. The Christian religion has "greater things" (50) in store for any Nathanael who will come and see. By these "greater things" reference is not made to the miracles of Jesus' ministry, but to the spiritual wonders of Jesus' power to save and to heal in Ephesus and elsewhere. Repeated use of the phrase in later passages of John makes this quite evident (*cf.*, xiv, 12).

John had a habit of ending each of his religious talks with a little apocalypse. Verse 51 is one of these little apocalypses. In this instance, "Heaven opened" is our author's way of telling the Jews in his audience in their own thought language that Jesus can also do the greater things for the Jew that he does for the Greek, by giving the Greek full access to the Logos-Light. The earlier Jewish idea of heaven was a place reserved for God and his angels, while human beings at death go to Sheol. In

John this gives way to new Christian teaching, more in line with Hellenistic thought. The reference in the ladder set up between earth and heaven to Jacob's ladder is so plain that it (Gen. xxviii, 12) would be unmistakable to any well-trained Jew. Something greater even than the high ethics of a perfect Judaism is obtainable by the Jew who will let himself be persuaded to make the acquaintance of Jesus. Heaven will descend to men on earth and by means of this power from on high the former Jew, now become Christian, may begin to live the life eternal that shall never know an end.

CHAPTER VI

THE WEDDING AND THE WINE

JOHN II

ii, 1. And the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee. 3. And when the wine gave out, Jesus' mother says to him, They have no wine. 4. And Jesus says to her, Woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come. 6. Now there were six stone water-jars set there after the Jews' manner of purifying, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. 7. Jesus says, Fill the water-jars with water. And they filled them full to the top. 8. And he says to them, Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast. And they took it. 9. And when he tasted the water now turned into wine, and did not know where it had come from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew) he calls the bridegroom and says to him, Every man sets on first the good wine, and when people have drunk freely, then the poorer wine: you have kept back the good wine till now. 11. This, the first of his signs, Jesus showed in Cana of Galilee, and he performed it as a revelation of his power.

It is necessary to bear constantly in mind that the author's purpose is not that of writing history. His purpose is to do a work of conversion in the hearts of his hearers and persuade them all—whether they be Greeks who believe in the Life-and-Light-giving Logos, or guileless Jews who are perfect exponents of the Judaism of the Law, or members of the sect of John who believe in the purified life of water baptism—that they cannot get along without Jesus and "belief in him." His method is the use

of symbol. He will tell as much or little of any incident in the life of Jesus as is required to make it useful for the symbol or sermon lesson which he is going to draw from it.

A symbol in common use in the early Church was that of something better in contrast to water. In the preceding chapter we have just read the words of the Baptist, "I baptize in water; . . . He baptizes in the Holy Spirit" (i, 26, 33). We may expect to find here the words, water and wine, turned into symbols of the contrast between the Christian religion and its rivals,

As the story begins, the parties concerned are Jesus, his disciples, and the mother. The expression which the mother uses, "They have no wine," is noticeable. To be sure in outlining the situation the story says that the wine had given out. But it is significant that the mother does not say, "They have no more wine," or "The wine is all gone." This would not fit in so well with the lesson which the author is endeavoring to suggest, namely, that until Jesus brings his power into action, life, as water unto wine, is dull and stupid. This marriage feast where wine so called has been flowing and where that wine has suddenly given out is a picture of human life. Human life—whether Godless or dependent upon the former substitute religions—without the power of Jesus has no wine in it of the kind of invigoration that does not give out. The humdrum daily round of human experience awaits the miracle of Jesus' presence to banish humdrum forever. In particular the author has in mind the Jewish manner of life with its legal statutes and its emphasis upon ceremonial and purification. Judaism cannot give to life the permanent exaltation of spirit which Jesus can give.

"Woman, what have you to do with me?" The question has given rise to endless discussion concerning the attitude toward his mother shown here by Jesus. It is exceedingly difficult to say that there is no disrespect apparent in the words. To be sure much of that disrespect vanishes when we admit the popular, colloquial, informal

style of the narrative at its full value. We must realize, too, that we are dealing with a Greek translation of Jesus' Aramaic words. But the deepest significance, for this Gospel, of Jesus' question is to be found in the same region of symbol as in the case of the mother's word concerning no wine in the preceding verse. In this other world of symbol, the mother may be thought of as meaning by her saying they have no wine, why not, without more delay, reveal to them the secret of the eternal life that never gives out?

Under such circumstances, the apparent disrespect vanishes from Jesus' reply, Woman, what have you to do with me? For at this point, even his own mother according to the flesh must not attempt to force his hand. When that time comes, it will be set neither by a judgment of hers nor even of his own, but a "thus saith the Father to me" will be behind it. This larger meaning becomes still more apparent if we take our stand in Ephesus and think of Jesus' mother as representative of Jesus' Jewish home and of the Jewish religion, which claimed that Christians ought to continue to obey the Jewish law. Compare Gal. iii, 23-25.

Moreover, giving his mother a minor place in his career is in accord with the omission in this Gospel of all reference to the family tree of Jesus or that he was born of a virgin.

"My hour has not yet come" is another puzzle to many interpreters. Throughout the Gospel this expression refers to the hour of Jesus' exaltation (vii, 30; xvii, 1). It could hardly refer literally to his immediate part in the Cana wedding feast in answer to the mother's suggestion. But its meaning in the region of symbol fulfills exactly the larger demand of the present passage. The thought was common in the New Testament churches that it was not until the exaltation of Jesus in his death and resurrection that the Spirit was given into the hearts of believers (*cf.*, Acts ii, 4, and esp. Rom. viii, 11). "The Spirit was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John vii,

39). The hour has not yet come but the result is about to be pictured in this Cana story of what happens when Jesus bestows his Spirit. Spiritual want gives place to spiritual plenty; life before is to life after, as water unto wine.

The six water-jars represent Judaism. Wherever ordinary water is mentioned in this Gospel it represents Judaism or non-Christian religion in contrast to the gospel of Jesus (*cf.*, i, 26, 33; ii, 6; iii, 5; iv, 10; Acts xix, 3, 6). But as though to make certainty doubly sure the author states that the six water-jars were set there for "the Jews' manner of purifying." Such symbolism would also be readily understood in Ephesus, where it had long been employed in pagan religious celebrations. Pausanias even speaks of "the empty jars which become filled with wine." It was "the Dionysiac illustration of beneficence and joy."[1]

If a reader is mathematically minded he may figure the amount of wine to have been perhaps as much as seven hundred quarts. Godet tells us not "to suppose that all the wine must have been consumed at this feast. . . . It was . . . the enduring monument of the Master's benediction upon the youthful household." But this is to miss the real suggestiveness of the prodigality, which is intended to take the imagination of the Ephesian listener beyond the little scene of the wedding and carry it up into the immensity of the realms of God's power and goodness. It would recall to the mind of man or woman in Ephesus such expressions as that of the next chapter: "He gives the Spirit without measure" (John iii, 34).

The statement in verse 9 that the ruler of the feast who tasted the wine "did not know where it had come from" is in line with the interpretation thus far given. It is an open confession on the part of a spokesman for Judaism that the new Christian way of life is a superior product to the best Judaism can show. The power of the Spirit of Jesus was a marvelous and inexplicable thing

[1] Carpenter, *Hibbert Journal*, 1923, p. 810; Grill, II, p. 107 ff.

to most early Christians. Perhaps John and some of the Apostles felt they understood something about it; "the servants that had drawn the water knew."

This is the first of the "signs." The office of a sign is to possess "significance." It is no mere accident that the author of this Gospel has this favorite word of his own for such an incident. The other gospel writers usually use such a word as "wonder" or "miracle." Our author extracts a significance from such incidents in a special way. A sign is a "revelation of truth through the symbolism of the outward act" (Westcott on this passage). A sign is usually regarded in John's Gospel as a sign, by way of suggestion or proof, that Jesus is Son of God. But throughout the Gospel it is plain that the demonstrations of the spiritual power of Jesus going on every day in Ephesus constitute the real proof that he is the Logos-Light incarnate. It is this spiritual power which is either symbolized or exhibited in these signs. In the present instance the turning of the water into wine is a symbol of the power of Jesus to turn the life of an ordinary man or woman of Ephesus that dissatisfaction and disappointment have brought to a dead stand-still into its very opposite. The good wine of the Spirit gives men a new kind of health and gladness and joy that never gives out.

To limit the words to their literal meaning would be as unprofitable in this Gospel as to say that when Jesus washed the disciples' feet (xiii, 1-15) the act must be taken at its face value only, and that when he said, "You also ought to wash one another's feet," he meant to inaugurate a single ritual substitute for the brotherhood life generally that should characterize his disciples. It would be about as sensible as to say that Jesus was a literal vine or that God is a farmer (xv, 1). It would be no more unreasonable to say that when Jesus fed the multitude with five barley loaves, the author expected his reader to detect no connection between that statement and the subsequent one, "I am the bread" (vi, 1-14, 35).

What our author did, then, was to select from the memorabilia concerning Jesus at his command and tell the incident thus chosen in such a way as to make it portray vividly both the power of Jesus and the most searching and deepest facts of Christian experience. He raises and answers no questions as a critic would concerning the historical basis of the story. He gives himself to the larger business of centering the attention of his people upon developing its religious significance. We do not, of course, even have the complete spoken words of the author, but only the notes which he used as a basis for his discourse. "You have kept back the good wine until now" may be taken as an example of the brevity and suggestiveness of these notes.

To sum up our views of the author's idea and purpose we might say that it passed through three stages or phases. First, he wished to use the story of the wedding at Cana in the interest of his purpose to make his audience in Ephesus acquainted with the personality of Jesus. Secondly, he wished to contrast Christianity with Judaism under the symbols of the water and the wine, and to show that Judaism has no reason for continued existence now that, through belief in Jesus, life takes on a kind of invigoration that never gives out. Thirdly, he wished to do the work of conversion for the Jews and the members of the sect of the Baptist in his audience. Indirectly, this would confirm the work of conversion that he had done for the men of Greek training, also members of his audience, by his portraiture of Jesus as the Logos-Light incarnate and of the life into which "belief in him" leads.

JESUS AND THE TEMPLE

JOHN II, 13-22

ii, 13. And the Jewish passover was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14. And he found in the Temple the dealers who sold cattle and sheep and pigeons, and the money changers sitting at their tables: 15. and he

made a whip out of rope, and drove them all out of the Temple, both the sheep and the cattle; and he scattered the changers' money, and overturned their tables, 16. and said to the pigeon-dealers, Take these things away; do not turn my Father's house into a market. 17. His disciples remembered the scripture, Zeal for your house will consume me. 18. Then the Jews asked him, What sign are you showing us, that you do these things? 19. Jesus answered, Destroy this Temple, and I will raise it in three days. 20. The Jews said, This Temple has been forty-six years in building, and are you going to raise it in three days? 21. But he was speaking about the temple of his body. 22. Afterward, when he had risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he said this.

The narrative of the Cleansing of the Temple, like the story of the wedding, acquires a different meaning when set down in church conditions at Ephesus as its context. The incident on which it is based is one which the author may have witnessed himself, especially if he was (as we have presented evidence) a Jerusalem disciple of Jesus. There are indications that he knew some at least of the episodes he narrates at first hand. It is quite possible that he inserts the cleansing of the Temple after his talk on the wedding story because of a close parallelism of teaching for him in the two.

Were this view true, it would afford the best explanation of the introduction of the cleansing of the Temple so near the beginning of the Gospel. For lack of an alternative, many scholars have felt compelled to reckon two occasions on which Jesus cleansed the Temple, admitting he did it in both instances in much the same way, performing the same acts and uttering similar words, once at the beginning of the ministry as related in John and again at the close as related in all the other gospels (*cf.*, Mar. xi, 15 ff). But if we accept the inference from the oral character of John's chapters that they were independent talks,

we notice at once the other explanation confirmed to a degree by the fact that there is no statement made that this incident did occur near the beginning of the ministry. This is the more true if it is granted that we are dealing with notes rather than a complete script of the author's discourse. There is no reason why John should not use two incidents from different parts of the ministry as the basis of an original address and its sequel in exposition in a double way of the one big subject. Verse 13 is not to be regarded as connected in time with verse 12. Verse 12 may itself be only an editorial conclusion to verses 1-11. In any case, the narrative of the Temple cleansing is an entirely independent unit and it contains no direct statement that the incident occurred at the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

It begins with very simple statements, employing the usual popular style of short sentences joined by "and . . . and . . . and." While in Jerusalem at the Passover Jesus became indignant at the way in which worshipers were exploited and cheated. A sort of trust controlled the situation. The basis of the monopoly was the hard and fast rule of the priests to accept none but "perfect" animals for sacrifice and in practice the only animals likely to pass as "perfect" came to be those sold in the court of the Temple. Only Jewish money was accepted in the buying and selling of these animals and in the payment of Temple dues. The coin of daily intercourse was largely Roman and Greek, and the money changers exacted an unfair commission. That the game of grab rampant in the outside world should shamelessly invade the "house of prayer" (Isa. lxvi, 7; Mar. xi, 17) might well seem unendurable to a man so little avaricious that he had not where to lay his head.

Verses 18 and 19 provide the telltale indications which show that we are coming now to the unfolding of the symbol or lesson which our author is going to draw from this incident. "What sign are you showing us?" The

word "seeing" found in the usual version has no basis in the Greek text. A suggested secondary meaning, however, if not the primary meaning, of the question certainly is, "What sign are you showing us in that you are doing these things?" That sign and its significance are to be unfolded in the following verses.

On the usual view, "sign" in the Gospel of John is always supposed to refer to a supernatural event. "Sign" probably always does in John somehow point out that Jesus is Son of God or Savior of the world. But a "sign" may qualify for this purpose without possessing any supernatural or miraculous quality. Circumcision is a "sign" (Rom. iv, 11). That the babe Jesus was wrapped and lying in a manger was a "sign" (Luk. ii, 12). The two ideas or kinds of signs may be well illustrated by citing two parallel passages concerning Jonah. In Luke xi, 30, Jonah is a "sign" to the people of Nineveh in the natural sense that his preaching was a warning of the fate that awaited them. A possible parallel meaning for the present passage would be that Jesus' act of stopping the temple merchandising was a warning to those present of dire things to come. On the other hand, the same passage concerning Jonah is referred by Matthew (xii, 39; *cf.*, xvi, 4) to the miracle of the deliverance of Jonah from the great fish.

There is nothing, therefore, in the current double usage of the word "sign" which would exclude its application to the cleansing of the Temple. While it may seem unlikely that the Jews on the spot would ask what was the significance of the act at the time, it is quite evident that an Ephesian audience would be interested principally in the question, What sign was he showing? The objection to calling the cleansing a "sign" sometimes found in John iv, 54, where the healing of the nobleman's son is called a "second sign," is overcome if our view is adopted that the cleansing occurred near the close of the ministry and is regarded by our author himself as subsequent in

the order of time to iv, 54, which speaks of the second sign.

Jesus' answer in verse 19 is particularly worthy of study. According to Mark (xiv, 58) false witnesses told the High Priest and the Council that Jesus had said "I will destroy this Temple made with hands and in three days I will build another not made with hands." As in some other incidents of the Passion Week and the Jerusalem ministry, so here also our author is the better historian in regard to what really happened than the synoptic gospels. That Jesus said "I will destroy this Temple" seems exceedingly unlikely. But the probability is high that Jesus would have intimated that the Jews were destroying their Temple by the mercenary abuses that were corrupting the highest officials of the national worship which has just been pictured. On the principle "you take my house when you do take the prop that doth sustain my house," they were destroying the Temple in ruining the worship for which it stood. Jesus issued a challenge to them and a promise to his followers that if this work of destruction were carried out to its bitter end he would raise the Temple worship up again, and explained that his temple worship would be a spiritual one, not one of animal sacrifice. "Destroy this Temple worship as you are doing completely and in three days I will raise one not made with hands."

This had all been proved out by the event before John wrote these words, just as in the case of the later prediction (iv, 21), "The hour is coming when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall you worship the Father." The Temple form of worship had been destroyed with the Temple and "immediately," or within a very brief space of time (this is the meaning of the phrase "three days"), the Christian form of worship had taken the place of leadership vacated by it. There can be no doubt that this was the meaning intended to be suggested by Jesus' orig-

inal words as studied in the light of Mark xiv, 58, and like passages, including the present one.

The interposition of "the Jews" at this point with an objection (20), "Can you in three days rebuild a Temple which has been forty-six years under construction?" constitutes a major element in John's style of exposition. Where he wishes to give further explanation of the "significance" of an act or saying, he introduces the Jews and a surface misunderstanding on their part as a foil to bring out his own deeper meaning in graphic contrast. The Jews were a most religious and spiritual nation. Indications in the synoptic gospels show that there were those among them who understood that by a temple "not made with hands" Jesus meant a spiritual worship. But there is no doubt that other Jews wedded to the existing Judaism were obtuse and that these references to the crass misunderstandings of "the Jews" enable our author to make his points clearer to his audiences. A similar misunderstanding crops out in almost every chapter (i, 25; ii, 20; iii, 4; iv, 11; v. 10; vi, 52; vii, 35; viii, 33, etc.).

"But he was speaking about the temple of his body" (of believers). The first noticeable fact in connection with this verse is that for many years the Christian Church had been called the Body of Christ just as in modern religious vocabulary. "We are members of his body" is Paul's statement in Ephesians (v, 30), or, again, "You are the body of Christ and severally members thereof" (I Cor. xii, 27). To these statements are to be added those others regarding the Church as a temple, "You are a temple of God" (I Cor. iii, 16); "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid which is Jesus" (I Cor. iii, 11). Paul spent a longer ministry in Ephesus than anywhere else. He founded the churches in the community in which our author lived and worked and talked. It is impossible to conceive this verse not being understood in Ephesus in the larger sense, namely, that when the

Jews had brought upon themselves the destruction of their Temple worship as well as their Temple, the power of Jesus raised in its place a worship of the Father in spirit and in truth on the ruins of the destroyed cult of animal sacrifice.

"When he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he said this" (22). The passing of the cult of animal sacrifice would certainly be one outcome of Jesus' teaching to which the disciples would be blind until after "he was raised from the dead." As stated before, our author's primary purpose in his talks is to fill the incidents of the gospels with large spiritual meaning, and to link the spiritual experiences of the Christians of Ephesus with incidents in the life of Jesus.

This brings us to a statement of the significance to our author of the narrative as a whole and the parallelism of its teaching for him to the wedding story. It is to be noted that the driving of the traffickers from the Temple would have corresponded merely to the water side of the wedding story. It is only when the worship of the Father in spirit and in truth raised up by the power set flying all abroad by the resurrection of Jesus, on the ruins of the destroyed cult of animal sacrifice is added that we have the parallel to the wine of the first story. This addition is peculiar to this Gospel, yet no student of the passages concerned can well doubt that it belongs here and that the words of Mark xiv, 58, belong with the story of the cleansing.

Like the wedding story, this incident of the cleansing might be said again to have a threefold purpose. First, the author wished to make the episode of the Temple cleansing serve his purpose of curing the ignorance of these Christians of Ephesus concerning the earthly life of Jesus. Secondly, he wished to show how the personal power of Jesus and the spoken words of Jesus had brought about the transformation from the old-time cult of animal sacrifice in a central shrine to the new emancipated spirit-

ual worship of the Christian Church. Thirdly, he wished, along with his appeal to the unconverted Jews of his audience to adopt the worship of the Father in spirit and in truth, to give at the same time a new symbol of the power of Jesus to the men and women of Greek training in the same audience whom he was trying to win over by his portraiture of Jesus as the incarnation of the Life-and-Light-giving Logos.

CHAPTER VII

THE BIRTH FROM ABOVE

JOHN III

iii, 1. Now there was a man named Nicodemus who was a leader among the Jews. 2. He came to Jesus one night, and said to him, Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. 3. Jesus said to him, No one can see God's realm unless he is born a second time, from above. 4. Nicodemus says, How can a man be born when he is old? 5. Jesus answered, Unless a man is born of water and spirit, he cannot enter God's realm. 6. What is born of the flesh is flesh; and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7. You must be born a second time. 8. The wind moves where it will, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from nor where it goes; it is the same with every one who is born of the Spirit. 9. Nicodemus said, How can that be? 10. Jesus answered, Are you a teacher of Israel and do not understand this?

11. We speak of what we know and testify to what we have actually seen. 12. If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe me, how will you believe me when I tell you of heavenly things? 13. And no one has gone up into heaven except the Son of Man who came down from heaven. 14. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, 15. that every one who believes in him may have eternal life.

In order to make it still clearer that the opening chapters of this Gospel are not intended by the author to be re-

garded as a mere historical synopsis of events of the ministry of Jesus but as a succession of incidents, all embodying the one central thought of the fullness of life open to us through discipleship to Jesus, let us review briefly the course over which the two chapters already studied have taken us.

To the Greek, darkness was a synonym of death and upon the Logos-Light of reason or knowledge rested his hope of salvation. He believed in the existence of this Logos-Light which was able to dispel the darkness in which he dwelt, but how to make his way from that darkness into that Light, he was obliged to confess was an unknown secret to him.

I will let you into this secret, said our spokesman of the Christian gospel at the very start to him. Give me a patient hearing and I will show you a man and a life in which that Logos-Light was embodied from whom you can obtain the secret of its possession.

There were also bound to be in his audiences in Ephesus, Sunday to Sunday, Jews belonging to the sect of John the Baptist. The bold stroke by which he sought to obtain a hearing for the Christian gospel from them was to quote their beloved leader's own words to the effect that Jesus far outranked him and to cite instances in which John himself advised and persuaded his own disciples to transfer their allegiance to Jesus. Baptism was their chief rite. From the Baptist's own lips again, his followers in Ephesus are told that what his baptism by water can do is as nothing to Christian baptism in the fire of the Holy Spirit which bestows upon the recipient the life eternal. Finally, he had to deal with Jews still wedded to the existing Judaism of Palestine. So, our spokesman for the Christian gospel in Ephesus had to show cause why a perfect Jew should take the amount of interest required to listen to a lengthy exposition of Christianity. I say to you what Jesus himself said to a perfect Jew named Nathanael, "Come and see" the greater things than Judaism has

ever been able to give its devotees which the Christian gospel has in store for its believers. Life without Jesus is like the wedding feast at Cana, where the so-called wine gave out compared to life in the power of Jesus with the wine in it of the kind of invigoration that does not give out. Doubtless you are not even half-reconciled as a perfect Jew over the fact that the Temple worship perished when the Temple itself was destroyed along with Jerusalem. Lament no more. The Christian gospel offers you a worship of the Father in spirit and in truth, raised up by the power set flying all abroad by the resurrection of Jesus to take the place of the former cult of animal sacrifice at a central national shrine.

Now that he has secured the attention of these three classes of the unconverted, the natural next thing for this spokesman of the Christian gospel in Ephesus is to address himself to the question, With what initiation are men initiated into the Christian ranks? Hence the next episode in the life of Jesus treated by him is this Nicodemus story.

Again the talk is a popular one in conversational style of question and answer. Its use of birth as a symbol appeals to every mother or father; and the statement that a man may be born a second time and start life afresh, is calculated to catch the attention of any one who feels that his youth has been misguided and wishes that he might make a right start in a new life.

"We know you are a teacher." That "we" is meant by the author to include within its circle the people of Ephesus before him; and indeed all who recognize a wise teacher in Jesus but have not as yet felt his personal power.

"Unless one is born anew, a second time, from above." (3) "Anew" is a word of double usage, like "wind" (8) and "logos" (i, 1) and "living water" (iv, 10) and "life" (iii, 16) and many other terms in this Gospel. It means both "a second time" and "from above" which exactly fits in with the author's purpose in the present passage

of using physical birth as a symbol of spiritual regeneration.

In Matthew xviii, 3, Jesus says, "Except you turn and become as little children you shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." The same truth is expressed here. But in the present passage the figure of being born again is in line with the Greek dualistic idea that the realm of the Light-and-Life-giving Logos and the realm of the physical man are essentially different realms exclusive of each other, in line also with Paul's great thesis that as we are all born of Adam in the flesh so we must all be born again to get into the spirit world of God and things divine. The Palestine Jew understood more easily the simple word "conversion" or "turning" (Mat. xviii, 3). The Greek understood more easily the radical idea of "regeneration" or "second birth." Moreover, this figure was in very wide use by more than one of the leading religions of the Greek world of the first century. In the Mysteries of Attis the members drank milk ceremonially to impress upon themselves the idea that they have started a new life.[1] In the famous description of the reception of Lucius into membership in the Mysteries of Isis after he has been put through an imitation of death and a sensation of dying, he is taught that he has been "born again."[2] In the later mystery literature the emphasis upon rebirth became still more central.[3]

This Gospel's ideas concerning sin are in line with this two-realm view, the realm of the flesh and the realm of the spirit. Sin is a failure to cross the Rubicon into the higher divine life when the chance offers. It does not refer to any positive moral transgressions which come between us and God and estrange us. Sin is decidedly negative in origin and character, unavoidable in the absence of the spirit of God. A state of sin, like a state of darkness, is

[1] *Cf.*, Kennedy, p. 93.
[2] Kennedy, p. 101.
[3] *Cf.*, Case, 328 ff.

a terrible thing, but is in reality an absence of light. The whole matter of sin and salvation in John is dealt with upon what, in the light of inherited Greek philosophy, would be called a natural basis. If the seed of the Spirit of God is planted in our souls through Jesus it naturally germinates and grows and that makes us children of God. As Paul would say, "It is no longer I that live but Christ that lives in me through his Spirit." Salvation is a simple transaction. His Spirit lights the way for us out of the realm of the flesh, where darkness reigns, into the realm of eternal life. The higher life to which we are thus introduced brings us into closer kinship with God. We live in communion with him. Sin is a love of darkness so great that when the light breaks, a soul refuses to move out of the realm of the flesh into the realm of the spirit, and settles back into darkness.

The misunderstanding on the part of Nicodemus serves the same purpose here as the misunderstanding of the Jews in the case of Jesus' words regarding the raising up of a new form of worship. It opens the way to a more detailed statement of the deeper spiritual meaning. Such misunderstandings occurring so constantly in the Gospel are used by the author to avoid treating his audience to its face as if its members were spiritually unperceptive. It would hardly have done for him to say right out to his Ephesian listeners, "Now I do not expect you to understand my meaning the first time and so I am going to explain it to you over again." But if it is Nicodemus who is unperceptive, or as in the next talk the woman at the well who asks for explanation, his audience can take no offense.

"Unless one is born of water and spirit." The modern Christian who believes in the importance of immersion often lays particular stress upon the word "water" in this verse. This is, of course, below the horizon of his present concern for the mind of our author. Water baptism is referred to here only as it represents purity in the nega-

tive sense. The rich young ruler was pure and perfect in the eyes of the law (Mar. x, 17-22). Nicodemus, too, was a good Jew. But John's great purpose is to show the superiority of the Christian religion to Judaism and to every other ethical culture body or moral system. Water baptism is quite insufficient. It is the new life born of the Spirit which is all important, for, compared to it, the old life is as death in a realm of darkness. John baptized with water (i, 26); Jesus baptizes with the Holy Spirit (i, 33; *cf.* again Acts xix, 6).

"What is born of the flesh is flesh" (6). This verse confirms the natural basis of salvation in the opinion of this Gospel noted above. If a man lives his entire life in the realm of the flesh he dies when his body dies; he has lived quite outside the spiritual world. If the Spirit conferred by Jesus enters into him, it lights the way for him out of the realm of flesh and its darkness into a divine spiritual existence triumphant over death and all the ills of the physical world.

"The wind moves where it will" (8) is another example of John's frequent use of words of double meaning. The words also mean, "The spirit moves where it will." The reference was a particularly happy one in the ancient day. Men did not have as clear an idea as we have of the materiality of air; and they had a somewhat more materialistic idea of spirit. When they saw the leaves of a tree gently moving or they heard the sound of a tempest approaching, they could not understand in the least the nature of the cause. In like manner, also, was it true that men in general did not understand the nature or working of the power of the Spirit of Jesus in the human soul. All that could be said of it on the day of Pentecost in Acts ii, 2, is that "there came a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind. . . . And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit." In the modern day as in the first century men have little understanding of the way the Spirit moves. Of the central fact which is fundamental—the power of

the Spirit of Jesus in regenerating the personal life of men and women—they are in no doubt even if it be something which cannot be calculated or predicted.

"Are you a teacher of Israel and do not understand this?" (10) No, he did not understand that any such initiation into the realm of Spirit was required nor did any other teacher of Israel. That was the glaring defect of old-line Judaism, as Paul, after his conversion, never tired of pointing out to his old comrades still in bondage. The plain everyday members of old-line Judaism had never been taught that such an initiation was required and the Greeks had never been able to find a sure bridge crossing from the realm of the physical to the realm illuminated by the Life-and-Life-giving Logos. In contrast, says this spokesman of the Christian gospel in Ephesus, the humblest Christian preacher can tell you about this initiation and of the Spirit that lights the way for us out of the realm of flesh where darkness reigns into eternal life.

Where does the incident end, and the author's remarks begin? There is no doubt that verses 16-20 are the author's own contribution; for in those verses mention of Jesus is in the third person and in the past tense. Neither can there be any doubt that in verse 10 our author is still reciting or reading a gospel narrative out of the ministry of Jesus. Verses 11-14, however, may belong to either section. This is characteristic of the Gospel of John. The author endeavors to make the transition in each chapter from episode to comment or lesson as smooth and unobtrusive as possible. This is parallel to Paul's way in Galatians. In Galatians ii, 14, we read, "I said unto Cephas before them all, If thou being a Jew . . ." Thereafter, there is no statement to indicate where the record of Paul's public oral words end and his written explanations begin.

In verse 11 is a small yet rather pointed indication that the author has closed his recital of this episode. The words, "We speak of what we know and testify to what

we have actually seen," are strikingly like the words of I John i, 1-2, "That which we have seen . . . we testify and declare unto you." Testifying to the truth of one and another factor in the Christian process of salvation is one of the favorite ideas and expressions of our author. So here. There seems to be no serious difficulty in the way of understanding this verse as meaning, "We full-fledged Christians have been through the experience ourselves. We have seen the Spirit at work in each other's lives and know that it has lighted the way for us out of the realm of the flesh into the realm of life eternal. We could tell you still more wonderful things, but until you believe the beginning of all that follows, what would be the use?" The expression "heavenly things" was a common one in the mystery religions by which to designate the higher inner teachings.

The author has recourse in verse 14 to a popular picture because it suits so well his purpose. No Sunday School pupil ever forgets the thrilling story of the serpent sting so fatal unless a powerful antidote counteracts it. What story or picture could more clearly or keenly illustrate the author's idea of the office of the Christian preacher?

To all three of these classes of the unconverted in Ephesus, he says, what you need, however little you may realize it, is to be exposed to the influence of Jesus until you are constrained to believe on him and become filled with the Holy Spirit. In order that you may come under his influence, it is the office of the Christian preacher to hold Jesus steadily up before your gaze as Moses lifted up the serpent.

"That every one who believes in him may have eternal life" (15). Here are two of the largest terms in the Gospel of John, and yet his use of them is often misunderstood. To "believe in" or "believe on" Jesus in this Gospel means something more than and something different from believing anything at all about Jesus. It does not refer primarily to the acceptance of any creed or the men-

tal acceptance of any statement whatsoever concerning Jesus. The history of the expression is a long one and many are the scholarly treatises which illuminate it. See the section on Belief in him in our chapter on the Characteristics of the Gospel.

In the first three gospels "to believe" generally means "to trust" and is applied to a trustful attitude toward God as a beneficent Father (Mat. viii, 13; xxi, 22; Mar. v, 36; ix, 23; Luk. viii, 50). In Paul's letters this trust takes the form of a warm attachment to Jesus; it goes deeper in the heart and assumes a mystical meaning. "To believe in" Jesus means for Paul to give Jesus such right of way in one's consciousness that he becomes master of one's life. Paul could say, "It is no longer I that live, but Jesus that lives in me."

To John our present state is a state of darkness. Darkness is the doom of all who reside in the realm to which the flesh belongs, not a doom awaiting us, but already fastened upon us. No one can live and move and have their being in the dark with any speed, comfort, profit or safety. John, in line with the Greek Platonic emphasis upon reason, felt that the light of knowledge was fundamental to our salvation. Salvation for those in the dark is simple to describe but momentous to go through—it amounts to emigration from the cave of the flesh into the light of open day shed abroad by the Logos-sun to the Greeks he was talking to, and the sunny life of the Messianic age to the Jews with whom he dealt. How to make the change from the one realm to the other was a conundrum that both Greeks and Jews had hitherto been unable to solve. Jesus has the solution. Belief in him is your part in that solution. Just how, we cannot tell any more than we can tell how a breeze blows up, but belief in him does open a channel for the advent of the Holy Spirit which lights the way out of the cave of the flesh for the Greek and removes the executive paralysis that renders the Jew impotent to obey the Law he reveres. Belief in him

is the name for John of the clasp of the hand by which any one may lay hold on the surcharged Jesus and be himself charged by the Holy Spirit and thus make the crossing from darkness to light, from death unto life.

The expression "eternal life" has practically the same meaning as the simple word "life" in this Gospel; for John's use of the word "life" is always in a sense larger than the physical. In a search after John's underlying idea the first fact which confronts a reader of the English Bible is that the revisers in the case of the word "everlasting," in spite of their aversion to changes not absolutely necessary, have in every case in John's Gospel removed that word and have substituted the word "eternal." The reason for the change on the part of the revisers is, of course, that the word "eternal" has a different meaning from the word "everlasting." Otherwise it would not have been deemed necessary. The change is in line with the meaning of the Greek word.[4] The etymology of the English word eternal corresponds to that of the Greek, which is derived from the word "Aeon" or "Age." The word would suggest to the Jew a future "Messianic age" and to the Greek a future "golden age." But Jesus declared to his Jewish hearers that the Kingdom of God is within you and among you. Among the Greeks also the Stoics and the mystery religions taught that men and women may live here and now a golden-age life. Our author's central idea, the most fundamental and inclusive proposition of his whole Gospel, is that it is possible in the midst of suffering and imperfection to receive from Jesus a fullness of life which exalts us above the common existence of the world and enables us to enter here and now into the spiritual brotherhood and the nobility of personal life which was hoped for by the Jews in their Messianic age and by the Greeks in their golden age. This is the life eternal.

[4] Brooke, *Int. Crit. Com. on I John i, 2;* McGiffert, *Apost. Creed,* p. 205.

THE NEW LIFE

JOHN III, 16-21

16. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 17. For God did not send his Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world might be saved through him. 18. He who believes in him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already. 19. And this is the judgment, that light has come into the world, and men have loved darkness rather than the light. 20. For every one who does evil hates the light, and does not come into the light. 21. But he who lives the truth comes to the light.

Verse 16 is without doubt the best known and the most used verse of the entire Bible. The reason for its popularity is the forcefulness with which it states the most vital thought of all active religion, the thought of the love of God for the human family that led Him to fraternize with them and their life in order that they might be enabled and led to fraternize with Him and His life. This thought is often found elsewhere in the Bible, but in this particular verse it is expressed in unique words that combine the deepest and most searching experiences of life. These most precious words in regard to human existence occur in this verse very nearly in the order of their occurrence in human life and history. The greatest word in the development of mankind is the word "God." The next in power and importance is "love." Third is the great "world" of men between whom and God love is the unbroken and unbreakable cable. Fourth is the experience of giving; fifth, the birth of a son; sixth, trust and partnership; seventh, the predicament of our living death; eighth, the attainment of life eternal. All these fundamentals the evangelist has combined and condensed into one sentence, the greatest sentence in the history of religion.

The antithesis contained in the words "perish" and "eternal life" is an instance of the author's fondness for contrasts; indeed, this particular contrast is the one most frequently used by him. Second to it in frequency is the contrast of darkness to light (19). In this same paragraph are several others of the author's favorite pairs of alternatives, God and the world (16), judgment and salvation (17), belief and disbelief (18), love and hate (19, 20).

The words "perish" and "eternal life" have again, like other words noted previously, two meanings. The Greek word "perish" here is not the usual word for "die," but carries the force of "giving out," of "being lost," or "disappearing," or "losing its usefulness." "Work not for the food which perishes" (vi, 27). "Perish" suggests, of course, in our own English use of it, primarily physical death, but the use of the past tense "has been judged already" in verse 18 and the use of the words "die" and "dead" in the sense of "not alive with eternal life" in many passages in Paul and John show that is here also the meaning (Rom. viii, 10; *cf.*, I Tim. v, 6). The lives of those who are "dead" in trespasses and sin have "perished," *i.e.*, have petered out or lost their usefulness (though there may be even for those who have "perished" in this sense a resurrection). Likewise the phrase "eternal life" has a double reference. Without question, this author maintains that believers already here upon earth enter into the life eternal. This new life of the believer is of such a nature that it will never give out. Death has no power over it, is utterly unable to lay it low. Hence it may be said that eternal life for this Gospel will continue in the life hereafter the fulness of life in the Spirit begun here.

The author's attitude toward a future Judgment Day naturally is intimately related to the fundamental ideas of this chapter. If, as we have just said, eternal life begins here as the natural result of the second birth and if living a material life is equivalent to being dead but not yet

buried, what function is left for the Great Judgment to perform? It should be remembered that Stoicism and Epicureanism and Greek philosophy in general also had little to say concerning a future Judgment Day. Secondly, this must have been one of the main points at issue between our author and the Jewish synagogue and in particular between him and the sect of John the Baptist whose whole teaching centered around the thought of a coming terrible judgment. Thirdly, we may say that a man who was sure in advance that he was qualified for citizenship in the realm of spirit and that the Judgment Day was incapable of interposing any barrier to his entrance would put the emphasis of his preaching somewhere else altogether.

"God did not send his Son to judge the world" is, therefore, to be understood as intended to be a straight contradiction of the sect of John the Baptist and other sects which put a Judgment Day in the foreground of their religion.

"But that the world might be saved" (17). The statement is often made that John believed only in the salvation of a selection of the world's population rather than in the salvation of mankind in general. This is only a half-truth. We should give full emphasis to the opposite testimony of this verse and the preceding verse as well (16). Such a verse as xvii, 9, "I pray not for the world," should never be read apart from verses like iii, 16, 17. While John recognizes that in the event some are saved and others perish, yet he is fully persuaded that the love of God embraces the world in its sweep.

The history of the growth of content in the words "save" (17), "savior," "salvation," has been discovered in recent years with considerable definiteness.[5] The Roman Empire was in a state of political turmoil and of constant warfare in the years preceding the accession of Augustus (31 B.C.).

[5] See especially Case, *Evolution of Early Christianity*, p. 284 ff; Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East, IV*, 9.

With Augustus came peace, prosperity, international fraternity. Men everywhere began to call Augustus the "savior" or "saver of the whole inhabited world." But his salvation did not last nor was it ever complete. In later years Claudius (41 to 54 A.D.) was also called savior, but his "salvation" again was a disappointment. Then, in despair of the accomplishment of world salvation, men turned to personal religion in search of personal salvation. What all the world of men were seeking to which these terms, savior, saving, salvation, point, our author proclaimed might be found in Jesus and his power, as Paul also had done. They were terms rich in meaning and in hope deferred to the Hellenistic world, especially during the period just preceding the expansion of Christianity. The contrast in verse 17 is, then, the contrast between the gloomy picture of a coming terrible judgment preached by John the Baptist and the good news of Jesus that a way of escape from all judgment, which might be taken advantage of at once, was open to men—a way of escape immediately available from the realm of the flesh into the realm of the Spirit.

But John's Ephesian listeners are insistent that he prove his point. In verse 18 we can almost detect a preceding unrecorded interrogation of theirs: Do you not believe in any judgment day at all? His answer is that the Christian believer does not have to face any judgment. The man who has escaped from the realm of the flesh into the realm of the Spirit has escaped from the jurisdiction of the court of judgment. As for the unbeliever a future judgment is superfluous, also, for, as any one may observe, he has already been condemned and is already suffering the punishment of his unbelief by the living death of the old life in the flesh which he insists upon continuing to live. John was talking to a world not over-responsive to Jewish Oriental apocalyptic imagery. He proclaims: "This is the judgment: that light has come into the world [to light men from the realm of the flesh into the realm of the

Spirit] and men have loved darkness rather than light." That is the kind of point of view of the judgment which appeals to John. He is all for values due and payable now and displays little interest in the promissory notes of a judgment due and payable in an uncertain and indefinitely distant future.

The expression, "lives (does) the truth" (21) occurs only here and in I John i, 6. This Logos-Light incarnate in Jesus runs a sharp line of cleavage through the world of men. Those on the left hand are they who love darkness rather than light and retire deeper into their old cave life of the flesh. Those on the right are they who welcome the Light and let it light the way for them into the realm of the Spirit.

THE SPIRIT WITHOUT MEASURE

JOHN III, 22-36

22. After this Jesus and his disciples came into the land of Judea; and there he stayed and baptized. 23. And John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim. 24. For John had not yet been put in prison. 25. So a discussion arose between some of John's disciples and a Jew about purification. 26. And they came to John. 27. John answered, A man can receive nothing but what is given him from heaven. 28. I am not the Christ. 29. The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. 30. He must become greater and greater but I less and less. 31. He who comes from above is above all others; he who is of the earth is of the earth; he who comes from heaven is above all others. 34. He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for he gives the spirit without measure. 36. He who believes in the Son has eternal life; while he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.

"After this" (22). These words are this Gospel's way, as we have noted before, of indicating the beginning of

a new section. There are no divisions between paragraphs in ancient manuscripts. The Greeks had the aid of no such literary machinery as is used in modern writing and printing. But they had more particles of speech indicating relationships. The handiest way for John to indicate a transition to a new incident was by such an expression as this one (*cf.*, v, 1; vi, 1; vii, 1). This is made still more evident by the statement that Jesus came into the land of Judea. In the preceding episode Jesus is already in Judea. If the chapter were undertaking to describe a continuous itinerary this statement would not be needed. But if these sections are the notes of separate sermon addresses, time and place must be restated for every episode. When we consider that Jesus' home was in Galilee, every separate Judean incident would naturally be introduced by the statement that Jesus went up to Judea. Such a statement is found many times in the Gospel (ii, 13; ii, 23; iii, 22; v, 1; vii, 2, 8, 14).

The statement in this Gospel's sources that Jesus baptized is allowed by him to stand here although in iv, 1, 2, it is corrected. It is interesting to read in I Corinthians that Paul did not personally baptize except in a very few cases (I Cor. i, 14). It is possible that Jesus likewise did not make a practice of baptizing. On the other hand, nowhere else is the statement made that the disciples baptized before Jesus' death (*cf.*, Acts viii, 38; Mat. xxviii, 19). The question is a difficult one. The idea that Jesus did not personally baptize would be our author's preference if, as he held, Jesus' peculiar function was to baptize with the Holy Spirit.

"John was baptizing at Aenon near Salim." Geographical questions are often perplexing ones in this Gospel. The easiest way out is to say that since John's hearers did not know Palestinian geography it was not important to state exactly the location of each place. This does not agree well with the author's care not to allow any atmosphere of vagueness or uncertainty to cloud his picture.

He localizes his incident carefully. Yet he is not writing for a map maker. It is often more important in reading this Gospel to note the sound and significance of the name given of a location rather than try to find it on the map. For example, in the next chapter he localizes his narrative by saying that it was "near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph," an allusion introduced plainly for the sake of recalling the beauty of the old stories regarding Jacob and Joseph. So here (iii, 23) it may not be entirely beside the mark to note that Aenon is derived from the Hebrew word for "springs." John was baptizing in a place called "The Springs." "Salim" is allied to the Hebrew word which means "peace." It is at least suggestively appropriate that the baptizing occurred at "The Springs" "near" the place of "Peace" (*cf.*, xiv, 27).

"John had not yet been put in prison" (24). Statements of this kind are of particular value for the understanding of this Gospel. They assume a knowledge of the events of the ministry. If this Gospel had been written as a consecutive narrative complete at each stage, there would be no place here for such a statement as this, for no imprisonment has been mentioned or will be mentioned. It is, instead, a selection of scenes out of the ministry. They suffice for our author's different purpose, which is to write something above and beyond history.

Verse 25 introduces the issue to be raised here, a questioning on the part of John's disciples with a Jew about purifying. In the synoptic gospels it is clearly stated that Jesus was not as elaborate in observance of ceremonial as the Baptist and the Pharisees. He was often criticized for his laxness in this respect. The question was a vital one in Ephesus. Both the Jewish synagogue and the church of John the Baptist emphasized the importance of washings and baptisms and fastings. Our spokesman of the Christian Gospel in Ephesus is out here, so to speak, to kill two birds with one stone. Both Jew and follower

of the Baptist will be compelled to choose between disobeying their great prophet or questioning his veracity if John the Baptist is made the court of appeal and renders the verdict himself that Jesus is the one sent from heaven. Our author goes on to explain that in Jesus nothing counts except the gift of the spirit (34) and the eternal life that follows obedience to the commandments of Jesus (36). Verse 27 is in line with the Hellenistic popular philosophy that not a trace of the spirit can have its origin in the realm of the material.

John himself, in verse 28, points again to Jesus (as in chapter i) and says again, "I am not the Christ." Under the conditions at Ephesus it is plain that a spokesman of the Christian gospel would refer to that bit of evidence over and over again in his discourses. Verse 29 is an argument in support of the position that Jesus, not John, is the one sent from God. It was an argument of immediate pertinence and power to his hearers. In fact, it has been a powerful argument in every age. "He that has the bride is the bridegroom." Here is an example of the kind of vivid, unforgettable figure, that this Gospel often uses. To his Greek hearers, the Logos-Light and to his fellow Christians the Holy Spirit is the bride. The possession of the Spirit in the eyes of the Jew or his embodiment of the Logos-Light in the eyes of the Greek proves that Jesus, not John the Baptist, was sent from God to be the savior of men. That is reason enough and to spare why the Baptist should have said when the question was carried up to him as the final court of appeal, "He must become greater and greater but I less and less" (30).

"He who comes from above is above all" (31). The popular Stoic and Platonic dualism again supplies the background for the understanding of these words. Jesus is the incarnation of that beneficent reason, that divine Spirit, which has guided and directed all things in all ages. There is no door of exit for the Baptist, who is of the earth, into the realm of the Spirit. But there is a door

of ingress into the realm of the material from the realm of the Spirit and Jesus has found it. He comes qualified to "speak the words of God" (34). He comes qualified to "give the Spirit without measure." The word "measure" is another suggestive cross reference. It is nearly the same word used as a measure in ii, 6. The over-generous quantity of the wine was a symbol of the prodigality of the Spirit.

Verses 34-36 reveal the reason for placing this section (22-36) in close conjunction with the talk on the second birth. Nicodemus has much the same question in mind concerning purification as "the Jew" in verse 25, and both answers have recourse to the spirit in their explanations. The use of birth as a symbol corresponds to the similar use of bride (29). The work of the spirit in the Nicodemus story (5-8) is paralleled by the reference to its mediator in 34. The picture of the Judgment in 18, 19 corresponds to "the wrath of God" (36). "He who lives the truth" in 21 parallels "he who believes on the Son" (36).

"The wrath of God" (36). This verse is a little apocalypse contrasting eternal life with the wrath of God. We almost feel that the author has turned away from his previous definition of judgment as we read the words and has reverted to the standpoint that at a future day God's wrath will destroy the world and send sinners to everlasting punishment. But if we look more closely we see that this Gospel uses the old expression "the wrath of God" with a new verb. The wrath of God for this Gospel is not an invasion of uncertain future date, but a prolongation of an existing condition. It "abides" where it is. Those who refuse to budge from the darkness to which they are accustomed when the light embodied in Jesus is offered to them continue, of course, to live their lives within the confines of the material. That, in itself, is equivalent, for this Gospel, to the wrath of God settling down to abide upon them indefinitely. On the other hand,

those who accept the offer of the light embodied in Jesus are empowered by it to climb out of the realm of the material and take up their permanent residence in the realm of the spirit.

CHAPTER VIII

THE WATER OF LIFE

JOHN IV

iv, 5. Jesus comes to a city in Samaria, called Sychar, near the piece of land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph: 6. and Jacob's well was there. Jesus, tired with his journey, was sitting by the spring. It was about noon. 7. A woman of Samaria comes to draw water. Jesus says to her, Give me a drink. 8. For his disciples had gone into the city to buy food. The Samaritan woman says to him, How comes it that you who are a Jew ask for a drink from a Samaritan woman like me? 10. Jesus answered, If you knew of the gift of God, and who it is that says to you, Give me a drink; you would have asked him, and he would have given you living spring water. 11. The woman says, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; where can you get the living spring water? 13. Jesus answered, Any one who drinks this water will be thirsty again: 14. but any one who drinks the water that I will give him will never thirst any more; but the water that I give him will become a spring of water within him surging up as a source of eternal life. 15. The woman says to him, Give me this water, Sir, so that I may never be thirsty, nor have to come all the way here to this well to draw water.

In this chapter John's talk is based again upon the very stuff out of which life on earth is made. Water is a daily necessity and the question of a good water supply will always be a pressing one as long as earth lasts. A recent traveler in Palestine became rather intimately acquainted

with an Arab boy of about twenty years of age. The young fellow one day found confidence to say that he would like to move to America. But before he made the final decision he felt that he must have the answer to two questions. One of them was, "How much do wives cost?" When told that prospective bridegrooms never had to pay a sum of money to the father of the bride in this country, the matter was practically settled that he would take the first opportunity of coming to such a promising land. But quickly a second thought and a second question came, "How much does water cost?" When told that there were free drinking fountains in the streets of our cities, his enthusiasm knew no bounds. America was the land of the blessed. The traveler feeling that he ought to know there were two sides to the question explained that the weather was sometimes so cold that it was necessary to find shelter at night. This proved to be such a mysterious terror to the young Arab that it took all the life out of his resolution.

The incident serves to show that where enough good water to drink daily was to come from was a main problem in the mind of a resident of Palestine or Asia Minor. After how to get a wife his big problem is not that of shelter or of food, but how to obtain a proper supply of drinking water. In deserts and on semi-tropical plains, the problem of a supply of good drinking water is of far greater importance than any one accustomed to a more northern climate can easily realize. The order of subjects in our Gospel, therefore, is quite appropriate. Next after marriage, chapter ii, and birth, chapter iii, comes not a talk on the problem of obtaining the best food, chapter vi, or on the best physician, chapter v, but on the subject of where to obtain enough good water to drink.

Serving as a background for the discourse is all the wealth of those legends of the ancient world which tell how men set out for distant lands in quest of the water of life. From prehistoric times popular belief has persisted

that there exists somewhere a Fountain of Youth of which a man may drink and live forever. As recently as the days of colonization of the American continent, Ponce de Leon set out on his expeditions in the hope that he might find perhaps in Florida, perhaps elsewhere, that long-sought Fountain. What John in essence is in this chapter seeking to prove to the three classes of the unconverted with whom he had to deal, from Jesus' own lips, is that Jesus is the fountain source of the spirit received in Christian baptism whose thirst-quenching properties never give out because it is in continual flow like a living spring.

John does not leave his story suspended in the air as far as place and scene are concerned. Jesus was near a city of Samaria called Sychar. He says that Sychar was near Jacob's spring and near the pasture ground given to Joseph. Thus the author humanizes his narrative with living vital facts and atmosphere rather than with what he would have called dry geographical data. By a fortunate accident of history Jacob's well has been preserved and has been identified beyond question today. It is over 100 feet deep. But our author's interest was engrossed in giving vividness and definiteness to his narrative for those who would never visit Palestine nor ever see a map of that country.

That Jesus should be sitting by the well at the noon hour while his disciples had all gone together into the city for food was quite natural. They would need the protection of numbers in the city. The people of the city located today near Jacob's well, Nablus by name, still maintain the old reputation for acute hostility toward outsiders. Travelers often have very unpleasant experiences there.

The request of Jesus, "Give me a drink," makes a very innocent point of departure. John's method was like Jesus' own—to start with a very simple statement acceptable to all within hearing and then lead his listeners slowly, steadily along an upward course. His Greek hearers in

Ephesus would not fail to note that this Samaritan woman was as much a foreigner in Jewish estimation as they themselves. Nor would this present Christian preacher fail to bring out the proof contained therein that Jesus was as willing to confer his spirit with its peculiar thirst-quenching properties that never give out upon all applicants, whether they formerly belonged to old-line Judaism, to the sect of the Baptist, or to some school of Greek philosophy.

For the answer of Jesus contains the same use of a phrase of double meaning, one on the surface and the other underneath, which we found in the story of Nicodemus. It is our author's favorite way of crossing the bridge with his audience from the physical to the spiritual. By this means the physical becomes a symbol of the spiritual.

The woman objects that Jesus has no means of drawing up the water from the depths of the well. The misunderstanding involved in her question corresponds closely to the one in Nicodemus' question in iii, 4, "How can a man be born when he is old?" In both cases the question saves our Ephesian preacher from implying that his listeners are too dull to see the point unless he goes on to explain Jesus' meaning to them.

The explanation of Jesus, "Any one who drinks this water will be thirsty again," parallels his word to Nicodemus, "What is born of the flesh is flesh." "A spring of water surging up into eternal life" is the continuing parallel to "born of the spirit" and "eternal life" in chapter iii. It stirs up in the woman's mind the picture of a spring bubbling up in her own yard which would assuage her thirst at will in all the baking heat of the hottest summer day, give refreshment, and save her from the tedious daily journey to the well which is the scene of the conversation.

As death unto life—no break less sharp—is the old life compared to the new is the message preached by the spokesman of the Christian gospel to his hearers in Ephesus

by means of the Nicodemus story. He makes that comparison the vestibule to his answer to the question of the inquirers among his rearers—with what initiation is the man desirous of joining your Christian circle initiated into membership therein? John returns the obvious answer that the only bridge from death to life is the bridge of birth and that with the gift of the Spirit a man dies out of the realm to which the flesh belongs and is born into the realm of the Spirit.

As a prospective settler, the young Arab asked among his first questions of the American traveler: Have you good drinking water in your country and how hard is it to obtain? After he had satisfied himself in regard to the mode of initiation, the same two questions would be apt to be the next ones asked by an inquirer in Ephesus concerning the Christian way of life.

As a drink which is really thirst-quenching compared to one that is deceivingly so,—such is the contrast between the old and the new, and by no comparison less extreme can the difference in quality be indicated. As a well an hundred feet deep to a living spring over which a man can stoop and drink his fill—such is the difficulty in the old world to which the flesh-born belong, compared to the ease of obtaining in the new world in which the spirit-born reside. These are the answers of the gospel according to John to the questions of the Ephesian searcher after the larger life.

GOD IS SPIRIT

JOHN IV, 16-45

16. Jesus says to her, Go, call your husband. 17. The woman answered, I have no husband. Jesus says to her, You are right in saying, I have no husband: 18. for you have had five husbands; and the man with whom you are now living is not your husband.

21. The time is coming when it will be neither on

this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, that you will worship the Father. 22. You worship what you do not know. We know what we worship. 23. The time is coming—and that time has now arrived—when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit with sincerity: for such are the worshipers whom the Father seeks for his own. 24. God is Spirit: and those who worship him ought to worship spiritually.

32. I have food to eat of which you do not know. 34. My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to complete his work. 35. Look at the fields! They are white already for harvest. 37. One sows, and another reaps. 38. Others have labored, and you have entered upon the results of their labor.

39. Many of the Samaritans came to believe in Jesus because of what the woman told. 40. And he stayed there two days. 41. And many more came to believe because of Jesus' own words; 42. and they said to the woman, Now we believe in him not because of what you have told, but because we have heard him ourselves, and we know that he really is the savior of the world.

43. When the two days were over he went on into Galilee. 44. For Jesus himself was a witness to the saying that a prophet has no honor in his own country. 45. So when he came into Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, for they had seen all that he did at Jerusalem during the festival; for they, too, went to the festival.

Verses 16 and following recall how Jesus told Nathanael he saw him under the fig tree and how he knew him well although he (Jesus) had never met him nor been told anything about him. So here, Jesus is said to know the inmost life of this woman whom he had never met before. The sun may be said to have free passage-way to whatever point its beams in their meandering may travel. So, Jesus as the embodiment of the Logos-Light that lighteth every man

that cometh into the world, John says, can follow that light in all its travels and, therefore, every man's interior history is an open book to him. Both Nathanael and the woman at the well made the great surrender to Jesus after one such proof of this supreme gift of insight as did many of the Samaritans of her city, hearing of it at second hand from her, simply because they believed that she was telling the truth. The attempt has been made to find an allegorical application of the reference in verse 18 to the "five husbands." Westcott suggests that it might refer to the five epochs into which Samaritan religious history divides. Only in the case of special terms, however, such as "living water" and "second birth," does John have symbols clearly in mind. Elsewhere the narrative in general is to be taken literally, always, however, with special reference to its Ephesian setting. The woman is not an allegorical figure. She is a real woman in John's narrative.

The chapter is full of applications that fit the Ephesian situation like a glove. "The time is coming when it will be neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, that you will worship the Father" (21). Today, this word of Jesus was fulfilled in their sight and hearing in Ephesus. Since the words were spoken, Jerusalem had been destroyed and its Temple form of worship with it. Ephesus has already begun to take advantage of the new order of worship of the Father in spirit and in truth. "You worship what you do not know" or "You worship the Unknown" (22) reminds us of the altar "to an unknown god" (Acts xvii, 23). It was plain speaking, but his conscience would not let him do less for those in his audience belonging to the three classes of the unconverted, none of which knew God in Christ. In verse 23, "And that time has now arrived" was probably spoken, therefore, by John with considerable emphasis. In every case in this Gospel where the phrase usually translated "and now is" occurs, it voices a conviction spoken by the author with a gesture

to indicate that it applied to conditions existing in Ephesus at the moment of speaking.

Many other verses should be read in the light of a similar Ephesian application. "Look at the fields! They are white already for harvest" (35). There is a world of Christian work to do here in Ephesus and more of it would get done if our own members were more consecrated.

"One sows and another reaps" (37) reminds one of Paul's words, "I planted, Apollos watered." Paul labored three years in Ephesus; "Others have labored and you have entered upon the results of their labor" (38). Similarly, verse 42 is full of local Ephesian meaning. Non-believers were first brought to the Christian church and so to a knowledge of Christ by personal effort and persuasion on the part of its membership. But after they had come to know Christ in baptism in the power of the Spirit, that former hearsay knowledge lost all its flavor. "Now we believe, not because of what you have told; but because we have heard [experienced] ourselves and know that he is the savior of the world" (42).

As our farewell to the story of the Water of Life it should be noted that the mention of unknown "food" in verse 32 constitutes a cross reference to chapter vi. These cross references are a vital part of the Gospel. The use of the word "food" in a double sense of the physical for a symbol of the spiritual in this chapter on the Water of Life prepares us for a religious understanding of the narrative of the feeding of the multitude and of the talk on the Bread of Life which is soon to follow. "I have food of which you do not know" (32).

"When the two days were over," or "After the two days" (43) indicates the ending of one address and the beginning of another sheet of notes for a new talk. We may expect the rest of the chapter to present a different scene and a different physical symbol for teaching over again the same fundamental Christian truth.

"A prophet has no honor in his own country. So when

he came into Galilee the Galileans welcomed him" (45). The statement has occasioned discussion without end as to whether the author regarded Judea or Galilee as Jesus' "own country." We have to remember that more than three-quarters of what takes place in the fourth gospel takes place in Judea. The author himself was plainly completely at home in Jerusalem; little, if at all, in Galilee. Modern commentators are fairly well agreed that by "own country" in this passage this Gospel means Judea. "It seems impossible that [the Gospel of] John should speak of Galilee in this connection as Christ's 'own country.' Both by fact and by the current interpretation of prophecy, Judea alone could receive that title."[1] There is no doubt that the contrary application is given to this proverb in Luke iv, 24: "No prophet is acceptable in his own country." Plainly in Luke Nazareth is Jesus' "own country," though Luke also distinguishes in this regard between Capernaum and Nazareth.

Again the solution of the conflicting statements becomes easy for one who takes his stand in Ephesus. Paul's preaching there had been almost entirely confined to the death and resurrection of Jesus, which necessitated no mention of Galilee at all. John's Gospel shows some tendency in the same direction. The reason is plain: in Ephesus much was known of Judea and Jerusalem, little of Galilee. Old Testament prophecy, in regard to the Messiah, also, centered around David's ancestral home in Bethlehem and Jerusalem. To an Ephesian audience Jerusalem and Judea as Jesus' "own country" would mean something, while Galilee would be to them nothing more than an unfamiliar name.

HEALING AT A DISTANCE

JOHN IV, 46-54

46. He came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a govern-

[1] Westcott.

ment official whose son was lying sick at Capernaum. 47. He went to Jesus and begged him to come down and cure his son; for he was at the point of death. 48. Jesus said, "Unless you see signs and wonders, you will not believe. 49. The official says, "Come down, Sir, before my child dies. 50. Jesus says to him, Go on your way; your son is going to live. The man believed the word of Jesus and went on his way. 51. And while he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was living. 52. He asked at what time he began to get better. They said, Yesterday at one o'clock the fever left him. 53. So the father knew that it was at the same hour when Jesus had said to him, Your son will live; and he himself put his faith in Jesus—he and his whole household. 54. This second sign Jesus showed after coming from Judea to Galilee.

Verses 46-54 supply the new narrative which verse 43 led us to expect. The progress of the chapter up to this point creates an atmosphere of keen anticipation. The knowledge of her past possessed by this stranger caused the woman at the well to believe in him. We naturally look in the present section for still another episode as powerfully suggestive. To heighten our sense of anticipation we are told at the outset that this incident occurred at the place where Jesus made the water wine.

The narrative begins with the request of the official that Jesus should come down and "cure" his son. The verb translated here as cure or heal is from the same root as our noun, physician. Jesus is the great physician. "Physician heal thyself" (Luk. iv, 23). "The strong have no need of a physician" (Mar. ii, 17; Mat. ix, 12; Luk. v, 31).

Twice the author uses the word "sign" of this incident (48, 54) to denote its extraordinary significance. In verse 48 the meaning of the word "wonder" is a supernatural event. The verse referred on the occasion on which it was uttered to the desire of the Jews to see staggering impossi-

bilities done before their eyes, but at the time and place this Gospel used it, it referred to a similar Ephesian itch to hear an account of how they were done. The author faced an audience which was more ready to listen to those who would tell them wonder stories than to one who called upon them to satisfy the conditions and obtain the gift of eternal life. In 46-54, the author yields this time to the popular demand for a story of a "wonder." In comparison with other religions of the first century Christianity was decidedly reserved in the use of miracle stories ("Zurückhaltend in der Erzählung von Wundern").[2] In the main, all three principal divisions of the New Testament, the Synoptic Gospels, the Epistles of Paul and the present Gospel express the same sentiment against "wonders."

It is noticeable that the author nowhere speaks against "signs" in themselves. The emphasis of the rebuke here in iv, 48, is upon the "wonders," just as in the case of the phrase in iii, 5, "Water and Spirit," the emphasis was upon the "Spirit." Wherever the author uses words in these pairs, it is the second member to which he is calling principal attention. The verse iv, 48, might be paraphrased thus: "Unless the signs of Jesus' power are set before you in the shape of wonder stories, you will not believe." The principal concern of the author when he tells a wonder story is that his listeners shall fasten their attention upon its "significance" understood as a symbol of the spiritual power at work in Ephesus giving proof that Jesus is Son of God. See comments on vi, 26.

Another suggestion of the spiritual under-meaning of the narrative may be found in the word "dies" (49) and in the contrasting term "lives" (50). After the brief introductory statement that the boy was sick and that the father wished him to be healed, the vocabulary of illness is dropped. Of course, the father continued to be interested mainly in the healing of his son. But when we re-

[2] *Cf.*, Deissmann, *Licht vom Osten*, 4th ed., IV, 11, p. 330.

member that the central antithesis in which our Gospel is interested is more often expressed in the alternatives, "death" or "life," than in any other terms the appropriateness of the wording of this narrative becomes evident. Verse 50 again is a pattern of our author's Ephesian gospel of belief and obedience. Jesus commanded, "Go on your way" and because he believed in Jesus' assurance that his son was to live, the man obeyed, "and he went on his way."

Perception when not present in person is remarkable (as in the case of Nathanael under the fig tree). How much more wonderful is perception when not present in person across a distance of time (as in the case of the woman at the well) stretching into years.

If these things be wonderful, what shall we say not of perception but of action, when not present in person, as in the case of this nobleman's son, sufficiently effective over miles of intervening space to heal a human being at the point of death? Because, when put to the test, Jesus' assurance that his son would live was vindicated, this nobleman, then and not before, believed on Jesus, he and his whole house, and they were all saved.

The Ephesian application is clear. Your life, which is as dear to you as the life of an only son to his father, is perishing. Indeed, your life in the realm of the material has never been, and can never be, much more than a living death. Accept, like this nobleman, Jesus' assurance that your soul shall live—put it to the test and the event will vindicate him and persuade you to "believe on Jesus" and thus be born again and take up your abode in the realm of the spirit. Time and space constitute no barriers to him nor to the lifesaving work of his power.

CHAPTER IX

THE HEALING OF THE MAN AT THE POOL

JOHN V

v, 1. After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 2. There is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, called in Hebrew Bethzatha, which has five porches. 3. In these there were lying numerous people who were sick, blind, lame, or paralyzed. 5. One man was there, who had been afflicted for thirty-eight years. 6. Jesus sees him lying there, and says to him, Do you wish to become a healthy man? 7. The afflicted one answered, I have no one, Sir, to put me into the pool when there is a stirring of the water. 8. Jesus says to him, Rise, take up your mat, and walk. 9. And immediately he became a healthy man, and took up his mat and began to walk.

The lack of chronological and geographical continuity in this Gospel has always been noticed by students. Of all the particular readjustments proposed, the one most often defended is that which places chapter vi between chapters iv and v. The reason for making this rearrangement is that the first verse of chapter vi states that Jesus crossed to the *other* side of the sea of Galilee. In chapter iv Jesus is on the proper side from which to make the above journey, *i.e.*, in Capernaum or rather in Cana (iv, 46); while at the end of chapter v Jesus is in Judea. If chapter vi followed chapter iv this apparent geographical slip would disappear. Our main interest in this rearrangement, however, is that it makes the chapter on the

Bread of Life follow the chapter on the Water of Life, for that sequence seems to be more in line with our idea of a topical order of chapters.

Adopt the view that the Gospel is a collection of separate talks or of notes for those talks, and all such readjustments to correct geographical conflicts become unnecessary. Starting an independent talk with the statement of vi, 1, that he went to the other side of the sea simply means, then, that since the thread of connection with the episode preceding in Jesus' biography has no bearing on the speaker's present purpose he does not stop to explain. To begin a talk as in v, 1, "There was a festival of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem," would also be equally right and proper.

But the present order of chapters or talks is also the natural order of topics to be expected, if due weight be given to conditions in the country in which the Gospel was written. In Asia Minor disease is as great if not a greater menace to life than lack of food. After the talk on an adequate drinking supply there might follow either a talk on an adequate food supply or one on adequate protection against ill health. It is not unlikely that a popular Ephesian audience would give a discourse on ill health and its cure precedence over a talk on food. This explanation also draws iv, 46-54, which is likewise a narrative of healing, into the picture. In an arrangement of the material used in these talks by subjects, the two cures naturally belong together as we have them. The symbolism is the same in the healing of the "nobleman's" son and in the present narrative.

"By the Sheep Gate" is another illustration of the fugitive character of the topography of this Gospel. We know definitely of no gate bearing this name in the time of Jesus. But a gate of this name is mentioned in the Old Testament (Neh. iii, 1).

"A pool called Bethzatha." "Bethesda," the ordinary English reading, means literally *house of mercy*. The cor-

rect manuscript reading seems to be Bethzatha, which probably means *house of the olive.*

Like the preceding narratives, this story undoubtedly rests on an historical basis. Scientific study makes it apparent that Jesus could and did perform such remarkable cures. Moreover, there is nothing in the narrative of the cure (v, 1-9) which may not be the record of an eyewitness. If the writer was not personally present, in this narrative, as in some other of his stories, he had access to faithful Christian tradition concerning Jesus.

The chief difference between these two cases of healing is that in the former the word of Jesus had lost none of its power after traveling across miles of space to act for him in his absence, while in this case it overcame the deadly work of thirty-eight long years of illness mentioned as proof that the disease was beyond any ordinary hope of cure. Singling out, perhaps, the worst case among the "great number of people who were sick, blind, lame or paralyzed" (3) is meant to indicate that his power to heal him proves that it is able to heal any one in any state.

"One man, who had been afflicted thirty-eight years." People had ceased to notice him. In that ancient day the number forty was indicative of interminableness. The children of Israel were forty years, an interminable time, in the wilderness. Jesus was tempted forty days. The idea sought to be conveyed is that if Jesus could withstand forty days of temptation he could withstand it forever. The man in the present story had been the victim of his affliction almost the limit of time. This fact is the main item. Nothing is said about the nature of his infirmity. It does not matter. Regardless of its nature, Jesus asks his question, Do you wish to become a healthy man? Note also that the man is cured without being touched and without the use of gestures or formulae such as are mentioned in the Gospel of Mark (Mar. vii, 32-34; viii, 22-25).

THE OBJECTION OF THE JEWS

JOHN V, 9-17

v, 9. Now it was the Sabbath day. 10. So the Jews said, It is against the law for you to carry your mat. 11. He answered, The man who cured me said to me, Take up your mat and walk. 12. They asked him, Who is the man? 13. But he did not know, for Jesus had gone away. 14. Afterward, Jesus finds him in the Temple, and he said to him, See, you are a healthy man now; sin no more, or something worse may befall you. 15. The man told the Jews that it was Jesus who had cured him. 16. This was why the Jews persecuted Jesus, because he used to do things like this on the Sabbath. 17. But Jesus answered, My Father is still at work, and I work also.

In the first decades of Christian history the disciples of Jesus kept the Sabbath day with practically the same care as the Jews. Now, only a few Christians are left who think of observing the Jewish Sabbath in any way. For us the Christian Sunday has taken its place. In all probability this falling off in the observance of the Jewish Sabbath reached its climax in Ephesus during the ministry of our author. Probably he could look back to a time when Christians still endeavored to observe the Sabbath. But it became more and more impracticable in Ephesus for the Christians, who were for the most part working people, to observe the day, since the Roman Empire decreed a legal holiday perhaps every fifth or sixth day in the year in celebration of the anniversary of some battle or imperial accession.

John probably took the bold stand on this question that since the Roman civic holidays gave them their one day's rest in seven, slaves and day laborers, as most Ephesian Christians were, with their keep to earn, could not be ex-

pected to observe any regular day. A man or woman might, therefore, even go about his work on the Jewish Sabbath, if necessary, as on any other day. As for the continued observance of the multifarious restrictions that had grown up about the day in old-line Judaism, we may well believe that John would say to his Ephesian hearers that these did not need to be observed at all. In answer to the objection that the Scripture says that God rested the seventh day (Gen. ii, 2; Ex. xx, 11) our author can cite Jesus' attitude, and say further that, as far as works of mercy and necessity are concerned, God works on the seventh day as on other days. Jesus answered them, "My Father is still at work and I work also" (17). This whole narrative is in line with the attitude that the synoptic gospels declare was taken by Jesus at the time of his healing of the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath (Mar. iii, 2) and with his saying that "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mar. ii, 27).

Another subject of importance is brought up in verse 14. "Sin no more, or something worse may befall you." The statement need by no means be taken as applying beyond this particular case. Some sins write themselves disastrously in the body of the sinner. Not all disease, however, is due to the handwriting of sin. The explanation is sometimes given that the ancients always assumed that physical sickness was the punishment inflicted of God for sin. But to ascribe such a belief to our author in his enlightened Hellenistic environment (especially in view of ix, 3, "neither did this man sin nor his parents") is to go too far.

"Or something worse may befall you." The words are in line with the celebrated verse of II Peter (ii, 20), "If after they have escaped the defilements of the world . . . they are again entangled . . . the last state is become worse than the first. For it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness."

Each episode in the life of Jesus introduced thus far

into this Gospel has been told first for its own sake and then for the convert-making material that can be extracted from it. The present instance is no exception. Verses 17 and 18 mark the line of division. Jesus' extraordinary defense of his act of healing on the Sabbath that he is only doing what his Father is doing and the retort of the Jews that in referring to God as "my Father" he had made himself equal with God prepare the way for the expository use to be made of the present episode.

THE AWAKENING OF THE DEAD

JOHN v, 20-29

> v, 20. The Father loves his Son and shows him everything that he is doing: and he will show greater works than these to make you wonder. 21. For, as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, just so the Son also gives life to whom he will. 22. The Father does not judge any man, but he has entrusted all judgment to the Son. 24. He who listens to my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life, and does not come to any judgment, but has already passed out of death into life. 25. The hour is coming, and is now present, when those who are dead will listen to the voice of the Son of God, and those who listen will live. 26. As the Father has inherent life within him, just so he has granted to the Son also to have life within him. 28. Do not wonder at this saying, that the hour is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice, 29. and will come forth; those who have done good, to a resurrection of life; and those who have done evil, to a resurrection of judgment.

This spokesman of the Christian gospel in Ephesus is looking at this incident from a distance of a half century. He cannot forget nor overlook what God hath wrought in those fifty years. He cannot, if he would, look at this cure through the eyes of a spectator on the spot when it oc-

curred. The most jealous living guardian of the miracles of Jesus among us cannot set them beside what God hath wrought in these intervening nineteen Christian centuries and hesitate in his judgment as to which is the greater and which the lesser series of wonders.

Moreover, for this Gospel, both disease and cure as they affect the body occur within the realm of flesh and the least transaction in the realm of the spirit is far more momentous than the greatest event that ever occurred in the realm of the material.

"And he will show greater works than these to make you wonder." The intervening fifty years have put that statement to the proof for the Christians of Ephesus and in their judgment it has come through triumphantly. Men like themselves in increasing numbers have been convoyed by the holy spirit, received in Christian baptism, from a living death in the realm of the material into participation in the eternal life that goes on in the realm of the spirit.

Thus is the way prepared for the author to present his attitude toward the apocalyptic dreams of his day. Prophecies were current to the effect that the world would be suddenly changed. On some future day the graves will literally give up their dead; there will be a physical resurrection of both good and wicked; there will be a great judgment, the wrath of God will be let loose upon evil, the righteous will enter into life eternal. Studiously abstaining from passing on these claims and carefully refraining from making any predictions of his own, John nevertheless extracts from all this imagery messages of immediate practical religious significance for his hearers. All these things have been fulfilled and are being fulfilled every day in their deepest spiritual sense before their eyes.

Readers of this book will perhaps ask at this point: Are we reading these words as the words of John or the words of Jesus? This question will be faced more fully in dealing with chapter x and chapters xv to xvii. But the modern point of view in regard to this problem may be

indicated here in four brief statements. (1) As noted in the case of the Nicodemus story, this Gospel does not always make unambiguously clear where Jesus' words end and the author's own words begin. Verse 19 in chapter v reads, "Jesus said." But the verses that follow after verse 19 (20-29) may very well be the author's own. Jesus is spoken of in them in the third person. There is no indication anywhere that Jesus is speaking except in the phrase "my word" in verse 24 and that "my" may just possibly refer to the author himself. (2) The talks contained in the Gospel of John were given from fifty to seventy years after Jesus' ministry. There is no sufficient reason for thinking that these particular words belong to any earlier date. (3) The very best ancient historians, Thucydides, Xenophon and others, put the hortatory speeches in time of battle, which they narrate, into the mouths of the generals in command, composing those addresses themselves to fit the occasion, and their readers all understood what they were doing and never mistook their word for the verbatim report of a speech actually delivered on the eve of that battle by the general in question. (4) The spokesmen of the great religions of the first century followed the same practice, using their own words but representing them, by their use of the first person, to be the sentiments of their founders or deities and all their readers or listeners understood they were doing it and none of them were deceived. The same thing is done in substance every Sunday in every pulpit in the land; only it is done in the third person and not in the first. See, also, the section on the "I" style in our chapter on the Popular Quality of the Gospel.

The simplest receipt for reading such words aright in modern times is to bear this practice in mind. The reader must supply some such statement as: "Now if Jesus were speaking here in Ephesus today, this is how, in my judgment, he would address you," or :"Mark or Matthew give a good idea of how Jesus talked to Jews. But to an audi-

ence of Gentiles and especially if he were sending a message straight to Ephesus, this, I am firmly persuaded, would be the burden of what he would have said: . . ." This Gospel is composed of the sermon materials of a master preacher at work interpreting Jesus to the people of Ephesus and so to the rest of the world. These verses under consideration here ring true to many sayings of Jesus in the synoptic gospels. "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed." "The kingdom is like leaven." "The kingdom comes not with observation."

The "greater works" of verse 20 (*cf.*, "greater things," i, 50) refer to the works performed by the power of the spirit in Ephesus; John regarded these spiritual wonders as far, far greater marvels than all the wonders put together that had ever been done in the realm of the material. Belief in him (Jesus) was giving "life" (verse 21) and opening heaven (1, 51) to many a man and woman during John's ministry. It was this gift of eternal life to increasing numbers which he identifies as the "greater works."

"As the Father raises the dead and gives them life." In this verse is the first, unobtrusive hint of the convert-making meaning to be extracted by this Gospel from the words "dead" and "life" and "resurrection." In the synoptic gospels, even, we note that Jesus used the word "dead" in a double sense: "Let the dead bury their dead." But all the wealth of figurative usage of these words in Paul's letters is back of their use here (Rom. vi, 11; Col. ii, 13). For the Fourth Gospel the word "dead" catalogues all those who dwell in the realm of the material as belonging to the dead (*cf.*, I Tim. v, 6); the word "life" means primarily the grade of life, to which it gives the name eternal, that believers have through Jesus, and "resurrection" is its term for the experience of escaping from the former living death into the succeeding eternal life. "He who listens to my word and believes in him who sent me has eternal life and does not come to judgment" (24).

The nature of the judgment (22) concerning which he is pronounced "not guilty" without even being brought into court has been described in iii, 19. Judgment is the fate of those who turn their backs on the light and consists of living in the dark. Those who believe on Jesus (22, 24) need have no fear of a future judgment. In leaving the old life they have already passed out of its jurisdiction (contrast II Tim., ii, 18).

In Ephesus the air was full of prophecies concerning the awakening of the dead on the day of the Lord by the voice of an angel or the sound of a trumpet. These expectations were based upon a literal acceptance of the imagery in the Book of Daniel and in other Jewish apocalypses. Even Paul in one passage takes notice of this "voice of the archangel" (I Thess. iv, 16). The words, "The hour is coming when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God" (25) should be understood, not as this Gospel's own words, but as a quotation by it from some such current prophecy. Parallel to them are the words of Dan. xii, 2, "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to eternal life, and some to shame and eternal contempt." In the midst of his reading or recital of the familiar prophecy (25), our author pauses, turns to his audience with an impressive gesture and adds as his own, the words "And is now present." Thus he repeats what he has already told them, that this day of the Lord has arrived and Christian believers are living in it. Believers in Jesus, all of them, had "already passed out of death into life" (24). Compare Eph. ii, 4-6, "When we were dead through our trespasses, . . . God raised us up." Col. ii, 12, "Having been buried . . . (*Cf.*, "graves," John v, 28) you were raised." Similar wording is also used in Rom. vi, 4.

"Those who are in their graves will listen to his voice and will come forth" (28). The words remind us vividly of the story of Lazarus, which will be taken up and explained later. They were generally regarded as a prophecy

of the wonders which shall take place at the inauguration of the Messianic age. This Gospel has explained, however, that these wonders are already taking place in the spiritual regeneration of lives in Ephesus. The introductory words, "Do not wonder at this announcement that the carrying power of the voice of Jesus shall penetrate the ears of the dead in their graves," might be paraphrased as "Do not misunderstand the nature of this prophecy." Do not take it too literally. But yesterday you were equally bewildered at the sight of men you had known for years rising up in the power of the spirit received in Christian baptism and departing from the grave in the realm of the material in which they had dwelt so long. No other means need be invoked—the same means that enabled Jesus to get a hearing in these more hopeless cases undoubtedly possess carrying power sufficient to penetrate the ears of a multitude of the long dead in their graves and will soon be doing so. It is the boldest spiritualization of apocalyptic imagery to be found in the entire Bible.

THE HIGHEST TESTIMONY TO JESUS

JOHN v, 31-47

v, 31. If I bear testimony to myself, my testimony is not true. 32. It is another who bears testimony to me. 33. You yourselves sent to John, and he testified to the truth. 34. But the testimony which I receive is not from man. 36. The testimony which I have is greater than John's; for the work that the Father has given me to accomplish, the work itself bears testimony to me.

39. You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you find eternal life; and these very Scriptures bear testimony to me. 46. If you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me.

Verses 31-47 are an illustration of the convert-making arguments used with inquirers in Ephesus belonging to

old-line Judaism for believing that Jesus is the revelation of God and Savior of the world.

Verse 31, "If I bear testimony to myself." Do not take my word for it, says this spokesman of the Gospel in Ephesus. Let me stand aside and do you imagine it is my Master standing here in my place, using my tongue to plead his own case. He would say to you, also, if only I bear testimony to myself, do not believe me. But I can summon another to witness for me and I know this witness is true. No, I do not now refer to John the Baptist. Your fathers sent to him once and he told them the truth concerning me. Only to help on your salvation, however, do I call John as a witness; for the years since John have borne a greater witness to me beyond that of man. In the works of the Holy Spirit through these years the Father himself has borne witness of me. Your claim that his word and love are abiding in you is disproven by the fact that the voice of his word and love as it fell from my lips speaks thus far in an unknown tongue to you. Again your scriptures testify of me and yet in your search for eternal life in them you do not find me. Finally, here I am, and you will not come to me and in the power of the spirit received in Christian baptism obtain the eternal life which you profess to crave. It is the blind who lead the blind like themselves astray who come in their own name, but you make it the chief ground of my offense to you that I come in my Father's name and ask you not to take my word for it, but point you to proofs beyond the power of man to its truth. I am speaking to you in sorrow and not in condemnation for, after all, if you will not believe your own scriptures which you profess to believe are your sacredest and most valuable possessions, how shall you believe my words?

The relation of verses 30-47 to the preceding sections of this chapter becomes clear from the above point of view. The first section deals with a remarkable cure of a bodily infirmity (1-18). The second section sets forth

a "greater" (20) wonder than this cure of a bodily infirmity, the new life of Christian believers. This third section (30-47) makes it plain that, for this Gospel, the new life of Christian believers constitutes the supreme proof that Jesus is the revelation of God and the Savior of the world. "Greater" in verse 36 harks back to and fills out the meaning of "greater" in verse 20, identifying the "work" (36) as the soul-saving spiritual wonders taking place in Ephesus and elsewhere.

As in the case of the dreams of the Apocalypses, he would have nothing to do with an attitude of sitting down with folded hands, waiting for a world cataclysm, so this spokesman of the Christian gospel will not rest satisfied with any view of the wonders performed by Jesus in the flesh except those which can be put to convert-making uses with his parishioners in Ephesus.

CHAPTER X

THE BREAD OF LIFE

JOHN VI

vi, 1. After this Jesus crossed to the other side of the Sea of Galilee or the Sea of Tiberias. 2. And a great crowd followed him because they saw the signs which he showed in what he did for the sick. 4. Now the passover, the Jewish festival, was near. 5. Jesus, looking up and seeing that a great crowd was coming toward him, says to Philip, Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat? 6. He said this to test him: for he knew what he was going to do. 7. Philip answered, Forty dollars' worth of bread would not be enough for them each to have even a little. 8. Andrew says to him, 9. There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish: but what is that among so many people? 10. Jesus said, Make the people sit down. So the men numbering about five thousand sat down. 11. Jesus took the loaves; and, after giving thanks, he distributed them to those who were sitting down; and the same with the fish, as much as the people wanted. 12. And when they were filled, he says to his disciples, Collect the pieces that are left. 13. So they gathered them, and filled twelve baskets with pieces which were left from the five barley loaves. 14. When the people saw the signs which he showed, they said, This is certainly the Prophet who is to come into the world.

This chapter on the "Bread of Life" comes close to the heart of the Fourth Gospel. Study of the book might

well begin with this narrative. All other portions might well be read in relation to it. For any one who has doubts as to the presence of symbolism in the stories of the Gospel, these doubts may best be faced and settled while reflecting upon these verses.

One misfortune which has befallen the Gospel of John in modern days is that a disproportionate amount of time is often spent at the start on a detailed study of the prologue. This is done in an effort to find in that prologue the author's whole metaphysical philosophy and his complete system of theology. Gardner remembers how in his course under Lightfoot "by the end of the term he had barely gone beyond the first few verses."[1] First impressions are hard to change. If a Bible student could begin his course on John with the sixth chapter and spend as much time upon that as the average course of study devotes to the prologue, he would obtain a much more wholesome and less confused impression.

The chapter consists of a talk that John gave on communion day. Other early Christian teachers, following Paul (I Cor. xi, 23 ff.), on communion day told the story of Jesus' last night upon earth and the details of his last supper with the disciples. In his description of Jesus' last supper John ignores the formal instituting of a Lord's Supper on that night, recorded in Paul and Luke. No such words are quoted by him as "This do in remembrance of me." John takes for his communion text the familiar story of the feeding of the multitude. He finds the story a symbol of a corresponding spiritual miracle. More than in any other chapter John is zealously solicitous that the incident shall be understood as a sign. The word "sign" occurs at constant intervals, in verse 2, again in verse 14, again in verse 26, again in verse 30. After verse 30 his unfolding of this internal significance has proceeded so far that he does not need to use the word further, but rises steadily from his base line statement of the com-

[1] Gardner, p. 312.

munion service "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, you have not life" (53) to his spiritual climax in verse 63, "The flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life."

His preference for the story of the feeding, instead of the events of the last night, as a communion day theme stands in close relation to John's idea of the work of Christ. Some Christian leaders regarded the death of Jesus as his great work, the paying of a price for the forgiveness of sins. Others like Paul regarded the resurrection as the supreme event. But for John it was the incarnation, the revelation of the divine Spirit in Jesus, which was central. As has often been remarked, this Gospel more than once refers to Jesus' work as "finished" before he died (*Cf.*, xix, 28, and xix, 30). No understanding of the Christian religion would of course be complete without allowing many points of view to supplement one another. John's contribution is to be sought in his own peculiar insistence that communion day means a receiving and partaking of the "spirit" and "life" (63) of Jesus, a nourishment of the inner life as a result of communion with Jesus. The purity and unselfishness of his life melt a way through our stiff minds and hard hearts for his Spirit to find entrance and regenerate and rejuvenate and instill us with eternal life.

The effectiveness of this talk and of John's communion day symbolism in general hinges upon the fact that bread is such an undeniable daily necessity. In reply to the claim that the Fourth Gospel is unduly metaphysical and theological, the answer is that the charge might be true of the people whom it is addressing, but that this spokesman of the Christian gospel in Ephesus himself is interested only in the immediately useful applications that can be extracted from these metaphysical and theological preoccupations of his hearers. What plainer, more homely, more matter-of-fact statement could be made than that Jesus is the breakfast or supper of the soul. It requires

no deep system of metaphysics to understand that as the body requires its daily food so the human spirit requires its appropriate daily sustenance. On the walls of the catacombs in Rome, no more frequent picture appears than that of the feeding of the multitude. It is plain that the imagery in these pictures is drawn from the Fourth Gospel with full appreciation of its symbolism.

John has already invested the eating of bread, drinking of water, being born, being cured and other acts of daily life with a Christian atmosphere and flavor. No one in John's circle of listeners could eat bread, take a drink of water, attend a wedding, or learn of a birth without being reminded of these talks and thus of Jesus and the new Christian way of life. Just as preaching, has better preaching ever been done? This method gave clearness and concreteness to his religious instruction. No one could fail to understand his meaning in the case of such terms as "bread," "eat," "satisfied," "filled." John has almost outdone Jesus himself in putting such vital everyday words and pictures to religious uses.

Those familiar with the Markan account will notice, as the narrative of the feeding proceeds, one or two differences. Verse 5 reports that Jesus was the one who first realized the hungry condition of the multitude (*Cf.*, Mar. vi, 35). The physician is the first to notice the telltale signs of sickness. Another difference is in the manner of the distribution of the bread. No mention is made of the use of the disciples as waiters. The reading in the Authorized Version has been shown to be secondary. The correct reading for verse 11 is "He distributed to those who were sitting down." Here again John is not primarily the story-teller engrossed in his tale; his eye is on the values that can be extracted from it for his hearers. He is first, last and all the time the evangelist with souls before him to save.

That John, in making this use of the story, was not setting any new precedent or following a method not readily

understood by his hearers, but was only doing what other leaders were also doing, can be shown by many a quotation from religious writers of the first century. A passage from Philo, the first century Hellenistic Jew of Alexandria, interpreting the Old Testament story of the manna, runs as follows:[2] "It is the utterance of God and the divine word. . . . This is the heavenly food which is indicated in the sacred records. . . . 'Behold, I rain on you bread out of heaven' (Exodus xvi, 4). For in very truth God distils from above the supernal wisdom on noble and contemplative minds; and they when they see and taste, in great joy, know what they experience, but do not know the Power which dispenses the gift. . . . But they shall be taught . . . that this is the bread which the Lord gave them to eat."

Detailed study of the verses brings out the religious power of the discourse. "After this" is one of the usual introductory phrases announcing a new scene or story. "The other side" assumes a knowledge on the part of the audience that Jesus' home was on the west side. "Sea of Tiberias," which is found only in this Gospel, makes an interesting item for Ephesian ears because Tiberius was a Roman emperor who had a home on the little lake of Galilee and one of its town was named after him.

In verse 2 the reference to "signs" was a hint to the listener that he was about to hear another incident, similar in significance to that of the signs "which he showed in what he did for the sick." "The sick" is another of John's favorite cross references in his constant desire that his preaching shall build up a single total impression. In this case the allusion is to the two cures of the preceding chapters.

"The passover was near." This explains the presence of such an unusual concourse of people. Such explanations show that John, even more than Mark, knows that small details help to make a story more interestingly real.

[2] *De profugis*, section 25. See also Westcott.

Another case in point is Jesus' question to Philip in verse 5. Not that there is any uncertainty on Jesus' part as to how it shall be done. Jesus knows (6); but it is his way to ask questions of those around him to set them thinking. Even a lad (contrast Mark) is allowed to help.

The two fish became as favorite a subject in early Christian art as did the loaves. On the walls of the catacombs of Rome a fish is a frequent sight. Its use as a symbol in early Christian history was so common that it almost approached in significance the cross itself. It recalled this story of the feeding of the multitude and thus echoed all the significance which John gathered from it. The Greek word for fish was unique, also, in this respect: every letter formed the initial of one of the chief words of the Christian Gospel. The word "ichthus" thus automatically represented to the Greek his words for Jesus, Christ, God's Son, Savior.

Ἰησοῦς
Χριστός
Θεοῦ
Υἱός
Σωτήρ

To parallel the situation in English it is only necessary to suppose that our word fish was spelled with the five letters JCGSS. Jesus is the Christ, God's Son (xx, 31), Savior of the world (iv, 42).

In the succeeding verses John's narrative follows the synoptic narrative rather closely except for the omission from verse 11 as noted above of the disciples as intermediaries in the distribution. The word "filled" in verse 12 has an under meaning. Both here and in verse 26 in Ephesus that word would suggest the rich and varied content of the word "fullness" as Paul used it in Ephesians (i, 23; iii, 19; iv, 13) and Colossians (i, 19; ii, 9). Paul's prayer for his converts is that they "may be filled with all the fullness of God"; and his conviction was that in

Jesus "dwells all the fullness of God's nature embodied." The same word had wide circulation in the mystery religions to convey the thought that human beings may be "filled" with divine knowledge and life and power. The sense of uplift which we feel in doing some one a real service, or in contemplating the stars, or after a quiet talk with God, was coveted by the people of Ephesus, and in the mystery religions was technically named the sense of "fullness" or "divine fullness." In verse 14 the word "sign" again reminds the reader or hearer to be on the lookout for the significance of this incident in relation to Jesus' divine mission and its under meaning as a symbol of Christian truth and experience.

The whole story thus far is a literal fulfillment as it stands of the beatitude, "Blessed are you that hunger now; for you shall be filled" (Luk. vi, 21). The sermon now to follow is keyed to the more spiritual beatitude of Matthew's gospel (v, 6), "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled."

THE STORM ON THE SEA

JOHN VI, 16-21

vi, 16. When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea; 17. and, embarking in a boat, were on their way crossing over to Capernaum. And it had become quite dark. And Jesus had not yet joined them. 18. Now the sea was roughening because of a strong wind blowing. 19. After rowing three or four miles they see Jesus walking on the sea and approaching the boat. And they were frightened. 20. But he says to them, It is I; do not be afraid. 21. Then they were going to take him into the boat, and all at once the boat grounded on the shore to which they were going.

Again John finds just the interlude he has use for in the gospel of Mark. His practice, as shown in ii, 12, chapter v, and elsewhere, is to interpose a slight interval

between a sign and the explanation of its significance. Postponement of an interpretation which he has in mind to give from the start is a favorite custom of the author (*Cf.*, i, 26). What could be more appropriate for this purpose here than the story of the conquering of the storm which in Mark immediately follows the feeding. Again there is no emphasis on the miraculous element. The story is told as simply as in Mark and far more simply than in Matthew (*Cf.*, Mat. xiv, 24-33). John had a strikingly genuine religious nature. He rejoiced in the poetry of the Psalms. There Jehovah walks upon the waters. He makes a pathway in the seas (*cf.* Is. xliii, 16). He lashes the waves into fury. He stills the storm at a word. He says to the wind, Be still, and causes the tempest to cease (Ps. cvii, 29). It is this imagery of omnipotence which these verses call up in his mind. While he does not say in so many words "The wind ceased" as is stated in Mar. vi, 51, the suggestion is there, just as the baptism of Jesus is assumed without statement in John i, 29 ff. The power of God manifested in the great works of nature suggests how overwhelmingly the power of God is equal to giving men fullness of life.

The purpose of the narrative of the storm is to surround the sermon now to follow with an atmosphere of God's sustaining power, which will serve as a transition from the story of the feeding to a presentation of the convert-making material which it contained.

FOOD FOR ETERNAL LIFE

JOHN VI, 22-51

vi, 22. On the next day, 24. when the people saw that Jesus was not there, they got into the boats and came to Capernaum to look for him. 25. And when they found him they said, Rabbi, when did you come here? 26. Jesus answered, You are seeking me not because you saw signs, but because you ate that bread and were filled. 27. Work, not for the food which perishes, but

for the food which abides for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. 28. They said to him, What must we do to perform the work of God? 29. Jesus answered, This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent. 30. They said to him, What sign are you showing? Tell us in order that we may see and believe? What is it you are doing? 31. Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as the Scripture says, He gave them bread out of heaven to eat. 32. Jesus said to them, It was not Moses that gave you the bread out of heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread out of heaven. 33. The bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven and gives life to the world. 34. They said to him, Master, give us that bread always. 35. Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life: he that comes to me will not hunger, and he that believes on me will never thirst.

vi, 41. The Jews began to murmur because he said, I am the bread which came down out of heaven. 42. They said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? 43. Jesus answered, 45. It is written in the prophets, And all men will be taught by God. 46. Not that any one has ever seen the Father except the one who is from God. 47. Whoever believes already has eternal life. 48. I am the bread of life. 49. Your forefathers ate the manna, and yet they died. 50. This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, of which a man may eat and never die. 51. I am the living bread that has come down out of heaven. Any one who eats this bread will live forever.

Before proceeding to the statement of his text or theme John tells something of the Galilean circumstances in which Jesus preached. The extended study of the religions of the first century which has been carried on in recent years has made us sure of some very definite conclusions. One of these is that a chief reason for the triumph of Chris-

tianity lay in the fact that its founder was not shrouded in legend and abstraction but was presented as an historic man of flesh and blood who had recently lived on a definite spot of earth. It was John and not Paul who was responsible for putting emphasis on the actual humanity of Jesus. So here, as elsewhere, John gives us a picture, Jesus by the Sea of Galilee surrounded by his disciples.

In verse 26 for the third time the word "sign" occurs. "You are seeking me not because you saw signs, but because you ate the loaves and were filled." It is clear from this statement that in this passage a work of Jesus rightly understood as a "sign" of his spiritual power constitutes a sound basis for Christian belief. Westcott paraphrases thus: "That one last miracle . . . was to you a gross material satisfaction, and not a pledge, a parable of something higher. You fail to see in it the lesson which it was designed to teach, that I am waiting to relieve the hunger of the soul."

The principal plea or theme of the discourse is stated in verse 27: "Work not for the food which perishes, but for the food which abides for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you." The word "food" here is translated "meat" in iv, 32, 34, and forms a link between the two chapters, the one on the water of life, the other on the food of life. In chapter iv Jesus said, "Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him shall become in him a spring of water surging up for eternal life"; here he speaks on the one hand of the food which perishes, and on the other of the food which he "will give," the "living bread" which abides for "eternal life."

When they put their daring question, How can we, too, learn to perform the works of God? (28) they receive the equally daring answer, the work of God for them to perform is to believe on him whom God has sent. Belief based on a personal knowledge of him (see on iii, 15) affords entrance to partnership and union with Jesus. The rela-

tion as portrayed in the verses to follow is so close as to be the meat or food by which the soul of the believer is sustained in vigorous life. If such be the outcome of "belief in him," christening it a "work of God" comparable to Jesus' feeding of the multitude is something more than the hyperbole it might first appear.

"What sign, then, are you showing?" (30) The expression, "for a sign," in the common version is misleading. The word "for" is not there. The expression is parallel to the question in ii, 18, and is perhaps equivalent to asking, What is the interpretation or significance of what you have done? They have been trying to think out a satisfactory interpretation themselves. Naturally, they would turn to their Scriptures and to a famous chapter in their national tradition.

"Our forefathers ate the manna" (31). The story is one of the most popular in the Bible. It was peculiarly serviceable with hearers familiar with Greek learning because Philo had already interpreted it to the Hellenistic world as a spiritual parable. In the quotation given above, Philo plainly says that the manna which came down was the knowledge which God dispenses to his children. This made it easy for a spokesman of the Gospel in Ephesus to be understood in saying that in Christianity the gift of the light and leading of the Spirit by Jesus was a greater dispensation out of heaven than all pre-Christian knowledge.

In verse 32, the likenesses in these two chapters continue, paralleling the contrast between water from a well an hundred feet deep and water from a living spring over which a man can always stoop and drink his fill. Quite possibly, the manna is to be understood incidentally as representing Judaism, just as did the well in the other story. Verse 32, after explaining that they were wrong in saying that Moses gave the manna, informs them that it is not to be confused with the "true bread" which comes out of heaven.

"Master, give us this bread" (34), duplicates iv, 15, "Master, give me this water," and the close relation between these chapters is further apparent in verse 35. "Shall not hunger" (35) is the carrying of the explanation to the point where the literal understanding becomes impossible and the spiritual meaning is forced upon the listener. "Shall never thirst" (35) is another echo from chapter iv, in form an exact repetition or quotation (*Cf.*, iv, 14).

John throws what he has to say into the form of dramatic dialogue again and again for the greater vividness to be gained from thus having Jesus speak in the first person. In this case, his use of dramatic dialogue enables him to ask his audience to imagine Jesus standing in the Ephesian church, speaking in person to them and saying, "I am the bread" (*Cf.*, notes on v, 20-29, and on, "I am the good shepherd," x, 7 ff.). Plainly, the gift of eternal life is inclusive of the meat and drink by which that eternal life is kept alive, not at a poor dying rate, but in vigorous good health. He is the bread of life (35) in the sense that one who "believes in him," in obtaining eternal life, obtains the meat and drink by which that eternal life is kept alive and vigorous.

In verses 41-51 it is again the Ephesian audience in the guise of "the Jews" which is objecting: How can a literal man of Nazareth, a son of Joseph, be spoken of as having come down out of heaven? (42). On "son of Joseph" see notes on i, 45, and ii, 4. John reminds them that it is a familiar teaching of their own Scriptures that men's knowledge comes from above (45). He counsels them not to understand him to mean that God is a visible being (46), but that just as their Scriptures furnish authority for speaking of higher knowledge as having a superhuman source, so it must be legitimate to speak of the higher life (47) as coming from above. John has told his hearers in Ephesus from the first that Jesus is the visitor to earth

from the realm of the spirit and that as the Logos-Light able to light the way for men who "believe in him" out of the realm of the flesh, he came from heaven bringing the gift of eternal life with him.

To be sure, the manna (49) came according to the story out of heaven, says John, but those who ate the manna afterward "died" like other men (49), *i.e.*, without finding a ford or crossing over into the realm of the spirit. Other religions in Ephesus which purport to come from heaven have failed men in this very respect; Judaism in particular. Paul testified that there was no ennobling power in its standard of morality sufficient to supply them with the ability to lay hold of eternal life. Paul says (Rom. vii, 9), "When the commandment came I died" (*Cf.*, "died" in the present verse, John vi, 49). But Jesus came from heaven, bringing with him more than a standard of morality, more than knowledge. In him was eternal life which is able under the conditions of contact described by John as "belief in him" to supply the spark of ignition that sets life like its own aflame in the soul of the disciple. He is in a real sense "the living bread" (51) inasmuch as the gift of eternal life would be a mockery except it included the gift of the meat and drink by which that eternal life can be kept alive.

THE BREAD AND THE WINE

JOHN VI, 53-58

vi, 53. I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have not life in you. 54. Any one who feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. 55. My flesh is real food, and my blood is real drink. 56. Any one who feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. 57. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father; so he who feeds on me shall live because of me. 58. This is the

bread which has come down out of heaven: not such as the forefathers ate, and yet died; he who feeds on this bread will live forever.

These six verses (53-58) contain six slightly varied statements of the one affirmation. While repetition is a characteristic of popular speech, one who reads these verses over and over cannot escape the impression that they are for liturgical use. The sixfold repetition appears to mark them as belonging to a communion service in which they correspond to the rhythm of some act repeated over and over. Possibly they are six out of many such variations used by the author in administering the Eucharist, which he noted on paper as illustrations of many such forms which might be used. Again, the six may have a completeness in themselves and have been used along with six several acts which John performed at communion. Perhaps there were six elders or deacons who assisted, or twelve to whom the author handed the elements by twos.

Their most striking characteristic is the extreme to which the physical or material symbol used is carried. John felt that in the distribution of the elements an extreme effort should be made to show the participant how thorough and complete must be his own assimilation of the eternal life embodied in Jesus. The thought of the Church never became confused enough over "born again" to sit down with Nicodemus and try to puzzle out an intelligible process by which a man could enter his mother's womb a second time. Nor did the thought of the Church become confused enough over "living water" to begin to wonder with the woman at the well over the location of the spot of earth whence Jesus was able to obtain it. Why the thought of the Church should have become confused enough over "eat his flesh and drink his blood" to sit down with "the Jews" and try to puzzle out an intelligible process by which "this man can give us his flesh to eat" is a mystery beyond solution.

Birth is the only door we know by which to get into life. The gift of eternal life made the best that the Greek could do with life with his philosophy, or the Jew with his Judaism, seem a living death to the Christian believers on Jesus in Ephesus. And as they had once lived this living death themselves they were the only ones whose word on this subject was worth attention. What could they say to inquirers but that the door through which they had to pass in order to get from their former living death to this eternal life was "a second birth"? When asked, what do men live on in this new eternal life, how could they reply other than to say that they had another kind of meat and bread to eat altogether and another kind of water altogether to drink?

The hour of the communion service is high noon for the Christian. It is natural for him, then, to dream dreams of what shall be when the work of the Spirit in him has reached the zenith of its perfect consummation. What higher flight can a Christian believer's prophetic soul take than to dream the dream that in the end he shall have a constitution in all points like that of Jesus?

When inquirers go on to ask them, then, what constitution is given to men with which to live this eternal life, how can they reply other than to talk in terms of flesh and blood, the time-honored form of words used to describe the constitution that makes us residents of the realm of the material? Finally, when pressed by these same inquirers to define for them the goal of eternal life at its maturity, what sublimer answer has any Christian preacher ever given than to say, we must feed on Jesus until our assimilation of the eternal life embodied in him is so thoroughly complete that we shall have a constitution in all points like his own.

"It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing: the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life" (63).

CHAPTER XI

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

JOHN VII TO IX

[viii, 3. And the Pharisees bring a woman who had been caught in the act of committing adultery. 4. They say to Jesus, Teacher, this woman was found in the very act of adultery. 5. In the law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what do you say? 6. They said this to test him, in order that they might have grounds for bringing an accusation against him. Jesus stooped down and with his finger wrote on the ground. 7. When they continued asking him he rose and said: Let the one among you who has never sinned throw the first stone at her. 8. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground (the sins of each one). 9. And when they heard (read) they began to go out one by one, starting with the oldest: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman. 10. Jesus rose and said to her, Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you? 11. She said, No one, sir. Jesus said, Neither do I condemn you: go on your way; and do not sin again.]

The story of the woman taken in adultery (vii, 53-viii, 11) is not found in the earliest copies of the New Testament. It is quite certain that it did not belong originally to the Gospel of John. On the other hand, it reads like a true incident out of the ministry of Jesus. There is no trace in it of the unnatural tone of later apocryphal gospels. It probably is a passage from the "Gospel According to the Hebrews," one of the comparatively early

extra-canonical gospels. The way it came to occupy its present position in the Gospel of John is probably this: Copied on a separate sheet, that sheet or page was tucked loose into a volume of the New Testament Gospels. Later a scribe in making a transcript of the volume copied this sheet into the text at that point, noting in the margin that this section was a separate fragment. Later copyists began to omit the marginal note which has now been lost entirely. There are a number of late manuscripts which contain the section embodied in the text, but the only important early manuscript containing it is Codex Bezae. Some later ones contain the interesting reading included in parenthesis in verses 8, 9. Other examples of matter drawn from independent sheets into the text of the New Testament are: Mar. xvi, 9-20; II Cor. vi, 14-vii, 1; also the last chapter, perhaps, of Romans.

This passage is of interest to us here chiefly as a means of showing the contrast between a piece of ordinary narrative of which this story is a good example and the quite different style in which this Gospel itself is written. Here we have no symbolism, no exposition of a sign. The woman is a woman and we are asked to take no other view of her. No object or word in the story can be understood in a double sense. There is no suggestion of anything similar to bread intended for spiritual consumption, to a wine of the spirit, to worship of the spirit, to living water. It is a plain story of the compassionate heart of Jesus. The teaching is the incident itself. The feeding of the multitude may be a symbol of spiritual feeding, but this story conveys only its own literal lesson in Christian forgiveness.

Students of the little narrative have always asked what it was that Jesus wrote on the ground. Perhaps he was only making aimless strokes during the time he took to consider the situation. More probably he was writing actual words. He may well have written the same words that he afterward spoke out loud to them. This seems more likely than the conjecture of the manuscript scribe

who answered the question on the basis of verse 7 by explaining that Jesus wrote down the sins of each one present.

A MAN OF GALILEE

JOHN VII, 1-41

vii, 1. After this Jesus spent his time going about in Galilee. 3. His brothers said to him, Leave this place and go into Judea. 4. For no one does anything privately if he is seeking to be known publicly. Show yourself to the world. 6. Jesus says to them, My time has not yet come. 9. And he remained in Galilee.

10. When his brothers had gone to the Festival Jesus also went, not publicly but privately. 12. And there was much discussion about him. Some said, He is a good man; others said, No. 14. About the middle of the festival week Jesus went into the Temple and began to teach. This astonished the Jews. They said, How has this man got his learning when he has never studied? Jesus replied, My teaching is not my own, but comes from him who sent me. 17. If any man wishes to do God's will, he will know whether my teaching is from God or whether I speak on my own authority. 18. He who speaks simply for himself seeks honor for himself.

19. Did not Moses give you the Law? Yet not one of you obeys the Law. 23. If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, to avoid breaking the law of Moses, are you angry at me for making a man healthy on the Sabbath?

30. His hour had not yet come. 31. Many believed in him and said, When the Christ comes, will he show more signs than this man has shown? 33. Jesus said, A little while longer I am to be with you, and then I am going to him who sent me. 35. The Jews said, Where is this man going? Will he go to the Dispersion among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks? 36. What does he mean when he says, Where I go you cannot come?

37. On the last day of the Festival Jesus stood up and declared, If any one is thirsty let him come to me and drink. 38. If any one believes in me, out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water. 39. By this he meant the Spirit which those who believed in him were to receive; for the Spirit had not yet come. 40. Some said, This is certainly the Prophet. 41. Others said, This is the Christ! But some said, What! Does the Christ come out of Galilee?

With the omission of vii, 53—viii, 11, chapters vii—ix contain for the most part notes of a talk or of a series of talks on a question probably often asked by inquirers in Ephesus: Can a man of remote Galilee and of little education be the Savior of humanity, and the light of the world? The relation between ideas of education and the figurative idea of light as knowledge at that time was very close. Perhaps chapter vii constitutes a separate talk from a second one in chapter viii; if so, the ideas in both are related. Chapter vii deals with two objections: (1) That Jesus was not known as a man of education (15), and (2) naturally no one in Ephesus would expect the Savior of the world to "come out of Galilee" (41). The defensive replies of chapter vii lead to the aggressive assertion of chapter viii that students of learning must go to Jesus, not he to them, for he is the one who dispenses the true education and the true knowledge which elevates and ennobles the life of man. Jesus is "the light of the world" (viii, 12).

The scene of the events of chapter vii is in Galilee, but the Ephesian situation was uppermost in John's mind. His thought moves in two sections, the one on the ground level of Palestine, the other in the upper air of a world-conception of Jesus' ministry.

Previously (in vii, 4) the disciples in Galilee were urging, "No man does anything in secret, if he is seeking to be known publicly. Show yourself to the world." As

is its custom, this Gospel seeks the sanction of Jesus for its reply to the request of inquirers in Ephesus for an explanation why he did his work in a remote corner of the world. That answer is "my time has not yet come" (vii, 6). For this Gospel that answer means "my time has not yet come" to begin my work in the world's big cities like Ephesus, Corinth and Rome. And after saying this "he remained in Galilee" (vii, 9). That this is the true significance of Jesus' answer for this Gospel is confirmed later after the introduction of the other question which concerned Jesus' education. In verse 30 that answer is repeated in this same sense: "His hour had not yet come," and to this is added the further information that yet a little while and I go to him that sent me and thither ye cannot come. Further light is thrown on the point of view which this Gospel here seeks to make clear by the question now interjected by "the Jews": "Will he go to the Dispersion among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks?" This is exactly, we know, what Jesus did do, spiritually speaking, and what John knew he was doing right then in Ephesus. Continued confirmation of this view meets us in verse 39 in the words, "The Spirit had not yet come." The work of the Spirit is his real work and represents the form his work is to take in the big world outside Palestine. What he did in Galilee he did only as a preparation. His hour for this work outside Palestine had not yet come then. This is John's answer to the oft-repeated question, "Does the Christ come out of Galilee?" (41).

The other Ephesian objection that Jesus was only an ordinary man is partially stated in verse 12: "Some said, He is a good man; others said, No." It is more fully stated in 15, "How does this man have such learning, when he has never studied?" In reality, the talk on the Light of the World which is to follow (chh. viii, ix) is the fuller answer to this question, but John first makes some pointed observations. He says that the world has had enough of emperors and leaders who speak *ex cathedra.*

They seek their own glory (18). What the world needs is not one who has a teaching or commandment of his own, but one who utters the truth at the heart of the universe, which he has been commissioned to tell (16, 18).

John's second preliminary answer calls pointed attention to the failure of Judaism in the face of the practical success of the Christian Gospel. "Did not Moses give you the Law? Yet not one of you obeys the Law?" "When the Christ comes will he show more signs than this man has shown?" (31). Jesus' work in Galilee and Jerusalem was sufficient to accredit him, small as it was compared with the works to be performed when he would "go to the Dispersion among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks" (35). "If any one is thirsty let him come and drink. Thereafter from within him shall flow rivers of living water" (37, 38). "By this he meant the Spirit which those who believe in him were to receive: for the Spirit had not then yet come." "This is certainly the Prophet. This is the Christ" (40, 41). The words are an appeal to the unconverted among his listeners on the basis of the work of the Spirit in the hearts and lives of Christian believers in Ephesus to accept Jesus as the bringer of eternal life to them, also.

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

JOHN VIII, 12-58

viii, 12. I am the light of the world: he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. 18. The Father who sent me bears testimony to me. 19. They said to him, Where is your Father? Jesus answered, If you knew me you would know my Father also. 21. I am going away and you will seek me; but you cannot come where I am going. 28. When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am what I say, and that I do nothing of myself, but speak as the Father has taught me. 29. For I always do what pleases him.

31. If you abide by my word, 32. you will know the truth and the truth will set you free. 33. They answered, We have never been in slavery. 34. Jesus replied, Every one who commits sin is a slave to sin. 35. A slave does not abide in the home permanently, but a son abides always. 36. If the Son sets you free you will be free indeed. 39. They answered, Our father is Abraham. Jesus says to them, If you are Abraham's children, do what Abraham did. 40. You are seeking to kill me, a man who has told you the truth he has heard from God: Abraham did not do that. 41. You are doing what your real father does. They said to him, We are not illicit children. 42. Jesus said, 44. You are children of your father, the devil. He was a murderer from the first, and does not stand by the truth because there is no truth in him. 46. Who of you can convict me of sin? If I am telling you the truth, why do you refuse to believe me? 51. If any one keeps my word he shall never see death. 52. The Jews said to him, Now we know that you are possessed by a demon. You say, If any one keeps your word he will never taste death. 53. Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets are dead. 54. Jesus answered, If I show honor to myself, such honor is nothing: it is my Father who does me honor. 56. Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. 58. In truth I tell you, Before Abraham was born, I am.

"The Light of the World." Next to the word "life" this word "light" is the most expressive and most powerful in John's vocabulary. Chapter viii develops its significance and leads up to an example in the giving of sight to the blind man (chap. ix). This is in full accord with John's custom of seeking among the stories of the ministry of Jesus the particular one which links up best with the major theme which he is developing. This is preëminently true in the case of his two greatest themes, "light" and

"life." The story of Lazarus in chapter xi is made to embody the supreme truth that Jesus is "the life" (xi, 25) and that he who believes in him "will never die" (xi, 26). Here the story of the giving of sight to the blind is so presented that no listener can fail to see how it adds depth to the significance of the phrase, "Light of the World."

In a way, the word "light" lends itself even more effectively to the uses of this Gospel than the word "life." Its figurative use is instinctive with all men everywhere, and is prominent in nearly all religions. Its secondary meaning is easy to grasp, yet limitless in suggestion. Night brought darkness in the ancient world. Work practically ceased at sunset. The only artificial light was furnished by a piece of wick in a spoonful of oil. Matches were, of course, unknown. There was no way in which the average person could start a fire for warmth or cooking or illumination except by borrowing a light from some other hearth. Many are the ancient legends proclaiming the preciousness of light. The most familiar story of all runs to the effect that the first bit of light or fire had been brought down out of heaven and given to men, which thus put man's existence in this particular on a level with that of the gods. This legend has points of close relationship with the idea that the light of knowledge equips a man to live the life of a god (see below).

In that day nearly every village had its shrine; and a chief duty of the shrine-keepers was to tend and keep the lamp or lamps burning in order that the people might never in any emergency have to do without this gift of the gods. In the Temple of Diana at Ephesus the temple virgins who guarded the sacred light were surrounded with great elaborateness of dress and ritual. Light, then, had its fourfold suggestion for every one. In the first place, it was a fundamental essential of daily existence, to be guarded and tended. In the second place, it symbolized the presence of deity in the temple, in line with the thought that its origin was heavenly and that it is akin to the

stars. Thirdly, to the more educated it was a symbol for the light of Reason, which is an essential to the mind and soul. Fourthly, light came to be regarded as the source or cause of life (*Cf.*, Light of Life, viii, 12; *cf.*, also xi, 9, 10, 25) from the fact of common observation that no plant grows in the dark, showing that light is essential to its vitality.

The so-called Gnostics in the time of John were making large use of the word "light" and its opposite "darkness" in the doctrines peculiar to them. They put special emphasis upon the third and fourth shades of meaning just mentioned. The relation that the Gnostics sustain to John has already been suggested in this volume.[1] They affirmed in many ways that knowledge is the "light" of men, that its source is heavenly, that it dispels the darkness of ordinary existence, and finally that it imparts a new life which because of the heavenly origin of light partakes of the nature of Divine Life. By the help of the light of reason a man may, in the midst of earthly handicaps, live a life that is heavenly in its nature.

John's use of light does not merely pursue the line of development of the Gnostic idea. His aim is less speculative, more practical. His use of the word is based rather upon all four shades of meaning mentioned above. Although he uses the same vocabulary in many cases as the Gnostics, it is not safe to assume that he was a complete master of Gnostic speculation. His own usage runs parallel with the Gnostic, and neither coincides nor is based upon it. John moves instead upon a very practical level.

Justin Martyr, a second-century philosopher, when asked why he became a Christian replied it was because Christianity enabled the common man to live like a philosopher. His meaning seems to be that a knowledge of Jesus gave to men with no schooling a self-control and dignity of life which a philosopher is still seeking at the end of an extended education. This explains John's emphasis upon

[1] Chap. II, section on Light.

"knowing" Jesus and upon the emancipating effect of such knowledge.

The Easter fire at Jerusalem is one of the most impressive Christian ceremonies of today. After midnight on Easter morning a torch, symbolically lighted from on high, is passed out of the empty sepulchre and gives of its light to scores of waiting, dead torches which are brought to life by its light. The light is carried to waiting lamps near and distant. From the Mount of Olives one on watch may see, hour after hour, more and more distant hilltops respond with flashes of light. This spread of light from the empty sepulchre continues until the day dawns. Such is the picture in John's mind as often as he speaks of Jesus as the Light of the World. The light of the knowledge of God in Jesus was spreading farther and farther into the darkness of the world in anticipation of the coming of the new day.

Although ideas and usages current in Ephesus entered into it, John found this figure of his, functioning in early Christian tradition and in the words of Jesus himself. Compare Mat. iv, 16: "The people that sat in darkness saw a great light;" and again: "You are the light of the world" (Mat. v, 14).

The conception of Jesus as the light is in John viii first safeguarded against identification with any view that the light which he gives is a product of his own personal philosophy. Secondly, its points of difference as well as likeness are, also, brought out when the comparison is made with the thought fundamental in Gnosticism that the light of knowledge "emancipates" men from the "slavery" of ordinary existence.

The Christian faith in Jesus is based upon no claim of his own in regard to himself. God is spirit and so are we. When Spirit speaks to spirit we hear God's testimony to Jesus: "The Father who sent me bears testimony to me" 18). Jesus tells his unbelieving opponents that he is going back above whence he came and that they will not

be able to follow because "belief in him" and what he represents is the only door to that realm for them. "Where I go, you cannot come." The over meaning of the crucifixion of Jesus (28) appears very frequently in the Gospel. When the Jews "lifted up" the Son of Man they exalted him to a position high enough for all the world to see and recognize him (*Cf.*, iii, 14).

But the chief hallmark of Jesus as the Light, in the understanding of this chapter, is associated with his emancipatory power (31 ff.). This thought runs parallel to but distinct from the Gnostic thought of the emancipating power of the light of reason. According to the Gnostic view "the soul of man is a spark of heavenly fire belonging to the divine sphere, but has become so entangled in matter that release is impossible without divine aid. This aid is mediated in the form of revealed knowledge. . . . Through this divine enlightenment the soul now attains liberation."[2] In verse 32, the straight highway to the whole truth on this subject is pointed out, *i.e.*, standing by Jesus' word. The familiar misunderstanding in verse 33 of "the Jews" leads to a fuller statement in 34, 35 of the Christian conception of freedom. It turns out to be in close agreement with that of Paul. Paul says, for example, in Gal. iv, 7: "You are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir." John, like Paul, develops the figure of a "slave" as contrasted with a "son" (35) into a picture of the emancipation of a slave (36); compare Paul's repeated "You were bought with a price" (I Cor. vi, 20; vii, 23); compare also Mar. x, 45, with its figure of a "ransom" or price paid for liberation.

The picture of a slave attaining his freedom was a common and impressive one in the Roman world. Epictetus is only one example in thousands. Former American conditions in which every slave was black and every owner white give a false impression of conditions in the older day. Often slaves then were educated; sometimes they

[2] Case, p. 327.

were noble-born men or women who had been captured in war or sold for debt. The ceremony of emancipation in some temple would be perhaps a daily occurrence for some fortunate slave in such a large city as Ephesus. There would be about it the same air of festivity for the slave and his friends as characterizes a simple wedding today. The attendant circumstances and ceremonies and the joy of all concerned are well presented by Deissmann in his "Light from the Ancient East" (Chap. IV, 8).

These same verses bring out plainly the world of difference between the Gnostic and the Christian conceptions of freedom. For the Gnostic salvation is enlightenment, illumination the process, and the slavery from which man is thus redeemed is the slavery of ignorance. The new freedom is the exchange of the darkness of ignorance for the light of knowledge. For the Christian, salvation is obedience, rejuvenation the process, the complete rejuvenation of our whole human nature, and the slavery from which man is thus redeemed is the slavery of sin. The new freedom is the exchange of the old paralysis of the will for the executive competency which "can do all things through Christ that strengthens me."

No doubt many times this Christian preacher of Ephesus when he addressed himself directly to men holding the Gnostic view of freedom cited old-line Judaism to them as an outstanding example on a scale centuries long of the powerlessness of illumination to redeem men from the slavery of ordinary existence. In the debate that is here being carried on with "the Jews," this ceremony of manumission is used by John to picture the genuinely emancipating effects of the spirit received in Christian baptism (37-59). The intensity of feeling manifested in such extreme language as that of vs. 41 and vs. 44, may be excused in the heat of the convert-making work of popular preaching to such inflexibly determined hearers as Jews still loyal to old-line Judaism. It is to be so construed if we accept the historical fact that literary convention in that day

made it common usage for John as a messenger to show men his burning conviction that he had Jesus' authority for the Christian message that he was giving them by turning it from the third person into the first. The alternative is not a prepossessing one if we insist that John had no part or lot in wording or content of this sermon talk. Why take from him, however, the privilege granted freely by us to the preaching of our own day, sharply distinguishing the wording of the message of the messenger as his own, but holding him to make its substance conform "to the best of his knowledge and belief" with the teaching of him that sent him. So, with the aim of bringing them to their senses, this Christian preacher of Ephesus said to these adherents of old-line Judaism, Your parentage may not be illegitimate and you may be descendants of Abraham according to the flesh, but by your words and works of darkness when brought face to face with the light of salvation in Jesus you show yourselves spiritually to be offspring of the father of lies. Again, he tells them that in exchange for their sitting with folded hands, marking time, waiting for a catastrophic intervention of God in death and judgment, Jesus offers to men a life that is life, indeed, for it will take them out of the jurisdiction of death and judgment forever (50-52). His final testimony to Jesus in this chapter is the argument that we do not have to take the word of Jesus for it that he brings with him the gift of eternal life, for it is confirmed of his Father by the gift of that life to as many as believe on him (54). How, then, can he be your God? How can you say that you know him if you have not this gift of eternal life as the proof that you are known of him? And if Jesus has the proof in this power to confer the gift of eternal life that he is known of the Father, how can he say that he knows him not? It would be a lie (55). Just as to Paul, the Mosaic law was only a parenthesis in Jewish history, so for John, Jesus is the embodiment of that Spirit whose activities antedate Abraham (58)

and is still engaged in its divine work in Ephesus. The light of the world which was incarnate in Jesus has been active in the human race from the beginning (*Cf.*, i, 1). It is noteworthy that even such a very conservative writer as Garvie (p. 13) calls attention to the fact that the statement is not made here that Jesus "was" before Abraham but that he "is." The phrase marks a "timeless existence."[3]

THE HEALING OF THE BLIND MAN

JOHN IX, 1-7

ix, 1. And as he passed by, he saw a man who had been blind from his birth. 2. And his disciples asked him, Rabbi, who sinned, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? 3. Jesus answered, Neither the man nor his parents; but the works of God are to be made manifest in what happens to the man. 5. I am the light of the world. 6. When he had said this, he spat on the ground, and made a clay-salve with the saliva, and anointed his eyes with it, 7. and said, Go, wash in the Pool of Siloam (a word which means Apostle). So he went, and washed, and went home able to see.

No pause occurs between chapters viii and ix. The thought of Jesus as the Light of the World emancipating men from their bondage in the darkness of ignorance is now given concretely symbolized expression in the story of the man born blind. All good public speakers cultivate the art of telling unforgettable stories which are the embodiment or incarnation of a life-giving truth. John makes doubly sure that the reader will understand that this story is introduced as the epitome of his theme, by stating the theme exactly in the middle of the story. Jesus is the "Light of the World" (5). His procedure here parallels that used in the preceding talk on the Bread of Life. There, after the story of the feeding of the multitude, the announcement follows that Jesus is the bread: "I am the

[3] Westcott.

bread of life" (vi, 35). So here: "I am the light of the world."

At no point in this story of giving sight to the blind man are we permitted to forget that it is a vehicle of a spiritual truth. The older commentators used to say that John undertook to narrate greater miracles than any found in the earlier gospels. It is often argued that this is the reason John chooses to tell not the cure of an ordinary blind man but of one who was blind from his birth. But it would be more to the point to say that the controlling reason why John chose this story was its close analogy to the religious fact, as John held it, that all men are born spiritually blind and remain so until touched by the power of life incarnate in Jesus. If John's main purpose had been to accent the supernatural in his picture of the marvel, he would hardly have narrated the making of the clay, the anointing of the eyes, the washing in the pool.

In connection with verse 2, "Who sinned, this man, or his parents?" the question is often asked whether John shared in the common ancient idea that every bodily affliction was to be understood as a punishment for sin. We pause to note that never in any passage of his Gospel does John speak of demon possession as related to physical ailments as the earlier evangelists do. This makes it clear that he did not share in that view. He does speak twice of demons, but in neither case is any physical effect mentioned or implied (viii, 48, 52; x, 20).

"Neither did this man sin nor his parents" (3). The natural inference agrees with the one just indicated that John did not accept the common doctrine of a close connection between sickness and sin. To be sure, the claim might be made that John means to state this case was an exception to the general rule of sin entailing sickness, and to say that this exceptional man was born blind in order that he might await Jesus' miracle, that "the works of God" should "be made manifest" in him. Rather, the

answer of this Gospel might be paraphrased—"Never mind just now about the origin of his blindness. Fix your minds on the works of God that are to be made manifest in what is about to happen to this man."

Paul, also, uses the word "light" in his references to his conversion and at the same time relates it to the word "knowledge." God, he says, shined in his heart, "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (II Cor. iv, 6). In fact, "light" is the most frequent word in all New Testament descriptions of Paul's conversion. The blindness and darkness of Paul narrated in the Acts' account (Acts ix, 8) form the direct antithesis of light and sight. The emphasis upon the light occurs not only in all three accounts in Acts, but in practically every reference in the Epistles, especially if we recognize the way that light and sight are presupposed in the word "reveal" (Gal. i, 16).

THE BLINDNESS OF THE PHARISEES

JOHN IX, 15-40

ix, 15. The Pharisees asked him how he had gained his sight. And he said, He put some clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see. 16. Some said, This man does not come from God, because he does not keep the Sabbath. Others said, How can a man who is a sinner show such signs as this? 17. They say to the blind man again, What do you say about his opening your eyes? And he said, He is a prophet. 18. The Jews, however, did not believe until they called the parents, 19. and asked them, Is this your son, who you say was born blind? 22. The Jews had agreed that if any one acknowledged Jesus as the Christ he should be put out of the Synagogue. 23. So the parents said, He is of age; ask him. 25. He, therefore, answered, One thing I know, that I was blind and now I can see. 28. And they sneered at him and said, You are his disciple; but we are disciples of Moses. 29. We know that God spoke

to Moses: but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from. 30. The man answered, That is the strange thing that you do not know where he comes from, and yet he gave me my sight. 32. It has never been heard of that any one has given sight to a man born blind. 33. If this man were not from God he could not do anything. 34. They answered, You were born in sin, and are you trying to teach us? And they put him out.

35. Jesus heard that they had put him out; and when he found him he said, Do you believe in the Son of Man? 38. And he said, Master, I believe. 39. And Jesus said, It is for testing men and for judgment of them that I have come into the world, that those who cannot see may see; and that those who can see should become blind. 40. Those of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said, Then are we also blind?

The three essential facts stand out in verse 15. They are, the anointing of the eyes (*Cf.*, Rev. iii, 18); second, the washing or baptism; and third, the fullness of vision. It contains two points that this Christian preacher in Ephesus never tires of elaborating: (1) I showed my faith in him by doing what he asked and (2) received in exchange for my lifelong stone-blindness, full and open vision. His use again of the word "sign" (16) is a signal to his hearers to be on the lookout for a significance to this episode extending far beyond the time and place of its occurrence. That larger meaning is nothing less than the answer to the question which many of his Ephesian hearers were asking: How can a man of distant Galilee crucified as a malefactor, regarded as a "sinner," be the Savior of all men? (16) The eternal answer is the answer of this man born blind. "The Jews" in verses 18 ff. are typical again of the multitude whom no man can number ever since, who question the power of the Spirit to confer the gift of eternal life upon the most obscure people. Right

in Ephesus was a synagogue, trying to discredit every claim made by the Christian church (18-21).

The reference to the rulers of the synagogue in verse 22 shows that the author's mind is intent upon the Ephesian situation. There were synagogues, to be sure, in Jerusalem (*Cf.*, Acts vi, 9). Yet John would hardly have substituted "synagogue" in this narrative, for "Temple," except his mind had been fixed upon experiences like those narrated so often of the power of the Gospel in the Book of Acts. Paul had made such progress among the "fearers of God" in the synagogues of the Dispersion that in self-defense the Jews in many cases put out of the synagogue any one who accepted the new teaching. Similar ostracism was undoubtedly the fate in Ephesus at the time of John's ministry of Jewish inquirers who dropped into the way of attending the Christian church.

The most striking aspect of this whole discussion is the contrast which it presents between a well-organized system of religion with all the prestige of age, and a new and struggling movement, handicapped by the presumptions raised against it by its very newness. As often as the report was circulated that a certain Ephesian had found new light and life in some little mission station of the Christian Church, the Jews would try to discredit its truth. How could it be true when, as everybody knew, the Christian Church had no standing. We know, said they, that Moses was God's spokesman because his word has stood the assaults of a thousand years and, like Mount Sinai, still stands unimpaired. But as for this man of yesterday, we do not know where he came from nor whom he speaks for.

We have had occasion to note before that this Christian preacher of Ephesus had an intensely practical bent of mind. Men tried and failed to lure him into an academic discussion of the nature and the agency at work, indeed, the whole process involved in the accomplishment of miracles. His word to those who asked to be shown how they, too, could work a miracle was the very pointed informa-

tion that the miracle for them to perform was full and complete surrender to Jesus. Other men tried and failed to induce him to sit down with folded hands and mark time with them discussing just what would take place on Judgment Day. His pointed word to them was that the gift of eternal life open to them through the power of the spirit conferred in Christian baptism would take them out of the jurisdiction of the Judgment Day and thus render them immune to all its horrors.

So this invitation to join in an academic discussion of theories of inspiration and a long drawn out inquiry to determine whether Moses or Jesus satisfies these criteria the better, leaves him cold. His answer to sincere inquirers, honestly seeking to make up their minds whether Moses or Jesus is the better spokesman of God, is to call in certain of their own Ephesian fellow-citizens and have them tell this blind man's story as their own: "I showed my faith in him by doing what he asked and received in exchange for my lifelong stone-blindness, full and open vision."

Verse 30 uses the same irony in its reference to learned teachers of theology which we have met in vii, 15, and especially in iii, 8, 10. In chapter iii, it was Nicodemus who did not "understand" the Spirit, "where it comes from or whither it goes," although he was a "teacher," and here the "strange thing" is that "you learned teachers of religion do not know where he comes from and yet he gave me my sight." Moreover, John takes the aggressive, prepared to champion before the whole world the doctrine that to open spiritually the eyes of a man is certainly a greater wonder than physically to restore sight. It is giving sight to eyes which were never able to see, but were "born blind" (32). The only reply which old-line Judaism could make to this shifting of the whole ground of debate was to fall back upon its old and never-failing defense that all Gentiles are sinners and that all Christians because they do not keep the law which "God has spoken" (29) are likewise sinners (34).

Finally, this talk closes with a paragraph (35-41) which makes it plain that the whole story is told for its spiritual significance. These verses parallel the close of the preceding talk on the feeding of the multitude, "The words that I have spoken are spirit and are life" (vi, 63). Here the man who received his sight and Jesus meet again and he "believes" (38) in the "Son of Man." Then follow the words defining again (*Cf.*, iii, 19) the Christian idea of "judgment," "that those who cannot see may see; and that those who can see should become blind." Involuntarily, it would seem, Jesus became the world's judge. "This is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light." To make it still more certain that the blindness is understood as spiritual, John refers to the familiar statement of Jesus concerning the Pharisees as "blind leaders" of the "blind" (Mat. xv, 14).

So, when the Pharisees ask (40) in utter incredulity, "Are we also blind?" the answer, on the above principle, is a straight affirmative. Before the coming of Jesus, the representatives of old-line Judaism possessed as much light and as good sight, perhaps, as any people in the world. After the coming with Jesus of the new light that lighteth the way into life eternal, the sight that was in them and the light by which they had been seeing was turned into darkness and blindness. Similarly, many who had been blind compared to them in the old order had had that lifelong blindness cured by "belief in him."

CHAPTER XII

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

JOHN X

x, 1. Any man who does not enter the sheepfold through the door, but climbs over at some other place, is a thief and a robber. 2. But the man who enters by the door is the shepherd. 3. And the sheep listen to his voice; and he calls to his own sheep by name, and leads them out. 4. He goes in front of them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. 5. And they will not follow a stranger, but will run from him—because they do not recognize the voice of strangers. 6. This Jesus said figuratively but they did not understand what he meant below the surface.

7. I am the door of the sheep. 8. All who came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. 9. I am the door; if any man enters in through me he will be saved, and will go in and out, and find pasture. 10. The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy: I come that they may have life, and may have it abundantly. 11. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep. 12. The man who is hired, and is not a shepherd, sees a wolf coming, and leaves the sheep, and runs away; and the wolf snatches them: 13. because he is a hired man, and does not care about the sheep. 14. I am the good shepherd; and I know my own, and my own know me; 15. and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: I must lead them, also, and they will hear my voice. 17. This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life.

18. No one took it from me; I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it back again. This is the commandment I received from the Father.

In chapter x John again goes for his illustration straight to the daily life of the common people of Ephesus. Bread and water were ideal subjects from which to draw religious lessons, because then, as now, they were daily necessities. Blindness was far more familiar than in America or in any European country. Sheep and shepherd belong in the same class. They were as unavoidable as is the telephone or the automobile today.

This chapter, like preceding ones, is a talk, but it takes as its starting point a paragraph from the teaching rather than an act out of the life of Jesus. The distinctive feature is this use in place of an incident or event, of a parable. This parable, however, is handled in the same way, *i.e.*, it is told for the sake of the symbolism introduced by John to tie it up with the life of Ephesus and make the parable a vehicle of truth for the guidance of the Ephesian Christians. The author worked and talked in a time when men might be put to the supreme test any day; for persecution was a constant possibility and often a grim reality. The times called for a warning against the many ephemeral teachers (1-6) who recklessly preached a gospel of revolt until the heavy hand of Rome fell when they flinched and fled and left their dupes in the lurch (7-13). John takes full advantage of the opportunity thus given him to introduce into his talk a very intense and instructive interpretation of the death of Jesus (14-18).

The basis of the whole talk, the foundation for all its symbolism, is the parable of the lost sheep. The shepherd of a hundred sheep, having lost one of them, goes after that which is lost until he finds it. And when he has found it he lays it on his shoulder, rejoicing.

In naming the shepherd of the lost sheep, Jesus, the

picturesque scenery and the popular appeal of the twenty-third Psalm are drawn in to enrich his exposition. "The Lord is my shepherd" (John x, 11, 14). He makes me to lie down in green "pastures" (John x, 9). "The presence of mine enemies" parallels the "strangers" (John x, 5) and the "wolf" (John x, 12). The "shadow of death" is paired with the "kill and destroy" of verse 10, and also the picture of the good shepherd laying down his life (x, 15). Incidentally, the shadow of death calls up its opposite, "Life" (x, 10), which is the basic word of this Gospel.

The figure of Jesus as the "door" is closely allied to Luke xiii, 24, "strive to enter in through the narrow door." The "door" is in John the concrete equivalent of "through Jesus," a fundamental phrase in Paul's thought. It is through Jesus that God saves us. Through Jesus we have "access" to the Father (Rom. v, 2; Eph. ii, 18). In John it is through belief in Jesus, and the union with him which follows in its train that we make the transition from ordinary human into the divine Life. He is the door through which "if any man enter in, he will be saved . . . and will find pasture (corresponds to bread in the talk on the Bread of Life) . . . and have life . . . and have it abundantly" (9, 10).

The first six verses of John x may be taken as an allegory. A parable when supplied with symbolism as the parable of the Lost Sheep has here been supplied with the symbolism of the Door tends to become an allegory. Allegory was by no means uncommon in the first century. Paul uses it more than once (*Cf.*, Gal. iv, 24). Most of Jesus' stories, however, were true parables. The distinction acquires importance in a study of the synoptic gospels. In a parable all the words are meant to be taken in their literal meaning; and the story has a single lesson or moral which is its "teaching." Here in John x the words are meant to be taken not in a literal, but in a figurative and metaphorical sense.

The "I" style imparts to verses 7-18 a tone of confession and prayer which becomes an important element. (See also the comments on John v, 20-29.) Plato in the Dialogues shows Socrates asking and answering questions in the same way that John pictures Jesus speaking these words, "I am the Good Shepherd." The very common use of this "I" style has been noted in our introductory chapter on the "Popular Quality of the Gospel." It was very familiar to the people of Ephesus. One of Deissmann's examples[1] is an inscription reproducing a bit of the liturgy of the Isis cult:

"Isis am I, the lord of every land. I was instructed by Hermes and with him invented the Demotic alphabet. . . . I gave men their laws which no man can change. I am the oldest daughter of Kronos. . . . For me the city Bubastis was built. I separated the earth from the sky, I showed the stars their paths. I set the course of sun and moon. . . . I made Right to be Might. . . . I gave the commandment that parents should be loved by their children. . . . I made justice stronger than gold and silver. I gave commandment that truth should be recognized as beautiful."

Hosts of humble, sincere preachers today enter on the work of a new parish in the same frame of mind as St. Paul, who said, "I am determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ." They have the most absolute conviction that the heart of their message has Jesus in person back of it. Daring as it is to the verge of the appalling for them to say so, they are eager to cry it from the house-tops that it is "not I but Christ that speaketh" this Gospel to you. But it all must be done in the third person. They do not dream of committing the shocking irreverence of putting their version of the Gospel on the lips of Jesus. And their congregations are a unit in approving this attitude. That passionate devotion to Jesus of every humble, sincere preacher today was shared in all

[1] *Light from the Ancient East*, chap. II, 3, E.

points save one by this Christian preacher of Ephesus. He did not have to put his Gospel in the third person. He could and did put his version of the Gospel on the lips of Jesus and his congregation were a unit in their approval of his course. The common use of the "I" style in his time made all that world of difference possible.

To recover the original religious tone of verses 7-18 the following is a good plan: First, insert the word "Jesus" in every instance in place of the pronoun "I"; then, after reading the paragraph in this form, substitute "thou" and "thee," and read the paragraph in an attitude of prayer; finally read the verses as John puts them in the first person, keeping in mind the eulogy character of the form taken by them in the first reading and the prayer-attitude given to them by the second reading. Here is an attempt to work out these suggestions in the present instance:

7. Jesus is the door of the sheep. 8. All who came before him (in Ephesus) were thieves and robbers. 9. He is the door; if any man enters in through him he will find pasture. 10. The thief comes only to steal: Jesus came that we might have life more abundant. 11. Jesus is the good shepherd: the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep. 14. He knows his own and his own know him. 16. Still other sheep he has: he will lead them also and they will hear his voice. 17. This is the reason the Father loved Jesus because he laid down his life. 18. No one took it from him, but he laid it down himself.

Then, in an attitude of prayer:

7. Thou art the door of the sheep. 8. They that came before thee were thieves and robbers. 9. Thou art the door; if any man enter in through thee he shall find pasture. 10. The thief comes that he may steal: thou hast come that we might have life and have it abundantly. 11. Thou art the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for his sheep. 14. Thou knowest thine own and thine own know thee. 16. Other sheep of other folds

thou also hast; them too thou wilt lead, and they shall hear thy voice. 17. Therefore doth the Father love thee because thou hast laid down thy life. 18. No one took it from thee; thou didst lay it down of thyself.

Then call to mind Paul's words in which he describes himself as an "ambassador" and sense his feeling of the presence of Jesus speaking through him in his words, "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal. ii, 20). Remember how Jesus said, "The Holy Spirit will teach you in that hour what you shall say." Focus your mind and hold it fast to the words of John xv, 4, "Abide in me and I in you." Caught up into these moods, now go back and read this passage as it stands once more as an expression on the part of this Christian preacher of Ephesus that the heart of his message has Jesus in person back of it:

7. Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. 8. All that came before me are thieves and robbers. 9. I am the door; by me, if any man enter in, he shall find pasture. 10. The thief cometh that he may steal: I am come that they may have life and have it abundantly. 11. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep: 14. and I know mine own, and mine own know me. 16. And other sheep I have: them also I shall lead, and they shall hear my voice. 17. Therefore doth the Father love me, because I lay down my life. 18. No one taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself.

Verses 7-13 read in this attitude of reverent adoration, glow with a warmth which shows them to be the product of personal gratitude carried to the pitch of incandescence. Out of gratitude to the Shepherd who had led him out of a life that was a living death, into a life that was a deathless form of living, Paul could not find hours enough in the day nor men and women enough to listen to his story of how he found the only true Shepherd our race has produced, for he leads his sheep into a pastured life whose

invigoration never gives out. With a depth of adoring which many of us believe exceeded Paul's, and in the same spirit of self-effacement, this Christian preacher of Ephesus longed that his hearers might become so enamored of Jesus, like himself, that they would forget the preacher and hear only Jesus' words of shepherding care.

Verses 14-18 carry a step further the explanation of Jesus' death already put forth by implication in the choice of the figure of the shepherd. In early Christian days, one chief problem set the defender of the Christian faith was how to account for the death of Jesus. In Ephesus one of the main issues was the question: How could a man crucified as a criminal be the incarnation of God's Spirit? The Jews made the most of their advantage here. Moses was a great law-giver and a man of God; and when he came to the end of his life God took him up into heaven. But this Jesus God allowed to be crucified between two thieves.

People love John's Gospel today more than they do the Epistle to the Hebrews, which offers a theological explanation of the death of Jesus. John's way was not the way of purely theological speculation. He gave men and women a simple picture which might be carried easily and securely in the heart, as a beloved image is carried in a locket. Why did Jesus die on the cross? Because, like a shepherd, he lost his life in defense of his sheep (15). What answer could be more readily understood, more easily remembered, or more satisfying in its significance?

The closeness of this shepherd's relation to his sheep is expressed in verse 14 and partakes of the mutually interpenetrating quality always present in the word "know" in the Gospel of John. "I know my own and my own know me" refers to no mere technical knowledge, nor is it merely equivalent to "recognize." When a man says that he can trust his friend to be loyal in an emergency because he "knows" him, or when some one says, in vouching for

another, he has "known" his friend twenty years, such usage of the word carries a faint suggestion of the practical, concrete intimacy which John puts into the word.

"Other sheep I have," spoken from the Jerusalem point of view looking out over the world, takes in, of course, the Ephesian flock. But from the Ephesian point of view it becomes an invitation to espouse the wider missionary spirit of the Christian Church. Jesus died in defense of his sheep, not the sheep of Galilee, nor the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but for the Christian circle in Ephesus; and yet not for them only, but for all those other sheep who shall hear his voice (16) and shall look to him for help.

"This is why the Father loves me." Verse 17 is the chapter's high peak and the supreme explanation of the significance of Jesus' death. In answer to the Jews' charge that Jesus' death was a mark of God's disfavor John is not content with a mere negative defense. He takes the aggressive with a positive appeal to that undying disposition in men to put in a class by himself one who dies in their defense or who risks his life to save others in time of danger. Why should God care especially still for Abraham or Moses? They had received their reward. It is the one who sacrifices his life for others whom God loves supremely and is determined that he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. They must not think that Jesus died because his executioners willed it. There was no power on earth that could have put him to death without his consent. Men for once were left out of his reckoning. They did not do his death to him nor did he do it for them. His death was his last bit of self-denial, his final proof of loving subjection to God, and the Father loved him for it, meeting this love of Jesus for him at its highest with his own highest love in return for Jesus. Such is the lofty view of the transaction of the Cross taken by this Christian preacher of Ephesus.

THE SON OF GOD
JOHN X, 22-39

x, 24. The Jews gathered around him and said, If you are the Christ, tell us so plainly. 25. Jesus replied, The work that I am doing in my Father's name bears testimony to me. 26. But you do not believe, because you are not of my sheep. 27. My sheep listen to my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28. and I give them eternal life. 30. I and the Father are one.

31. The Jews picked up stones with which to stone him. 32. Jesus said, Many good works I have shown you from the Father; for which of those works are you stoning me? 33. The Jews answered, We are not stoning you for your good works, but because you who are only a man make yourself out to be God. 34. Jesus answered, Is it not written in your Law, "I said, You are gods"? 36. Can you say I am blaspheming, because I said I am a son of God? 37. If I am not doing the works of my Father, do not believe me. 38. But if I am doing them, even if you will not believe me, believe the works: that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I in the Father.

Verses 22-39 continue to discuss Jesus under the figure of the shepherd. Two particular questions which John's audience would naturally have in mind are taken up. The first is subordinate to the second. The first question is: If Jesus is the Christ, why do not the Jews accept their own long promised Messiah (22-31)? The second question is: How can Christians assert that a man of Galilee is Son of God (32-38)?

In verse 24 the Jews ask Jesus to end their suspense, and tell them frankly if he is the Christ. The answer put on the lips of Jesus is that since he has told and they will not believe him, perhaps the fact that his works reflect the character of God will prove acceptable witness to them

(25). The Jews do not understand that God is love, or they would recognize God's "voice" of love in Jesus (27). This question of the rejection of Israel as a penalty brought upon itself by its rejection of Jesus was one of Paul's greatest puzzles. He devotes three chapters of his Epistle to the Romans to the expression of his "heart's desire" that the Jews may yet be saved (Rom. ix-xi). Paul's solution of his puzzle was to maintain that God still was minded to include the Jews in the Christian fold. But in Ephesus this solution did not seem a very immediate prospect. John's interest was in the present situation with which he had to deal; and hostility then between Jewish synagogue and Christian communion was keen. Growing hostility is shown to be the state of affairs throughout the Book of Acts. As a working basis for his own solution John's picture of the shepherd was a very effective one. "You do not believe, because you are not of my sheep." Jesus saves all who have enough of the love of God in their hearts to listen to the voice of his love as it falls from the lips of Jesus and follow him (27); and to them he gives eternal life (28). The conduct of the Jews gives the lie to their boast that the God of love is their God when they turn their backs on the voice of God's love as it falls from the lips of Jesus. In that high, substantial and exalted sense he and the Father are one.

This comparison between Jesus and the Father (30) leads in verses 32-38 to what may be said to be the supreme question of our religion. How can a man of Galilee be "Son of God"? This question is answered first from the Jewish point of view (34-36) and then from the point of view of the Greeks of Ephesus (37, 38). Incidentally the first answer must have contained some help also for Greeks who knew something of Jewish terminology; so that both were cogent and forceful replies to make in Ephesus.

The term "Son of God" led to much misunderstanding and consequent controversy in the early Church. Jews, *e.g.*, the Jews of Ephesus, could not accept the term in the

Greek sense of intimate union with Deity, because that would be in conflict with their traditional view of God's isolation. Greeks could not understand the term in the Jewish sense, because that implied that God and man wear the same image, which to Greeks was an impossible idea. The difficulty involved in this difference of point of view not only explains the declining success of Christian work among the Jews in Ephesus, but in large measure explains the age-long estrangement of Jew and Christian.

Verses 34-36 make the Jewish meaning of the term "Son of God" the point of departure in giving the first answer. Throughout Hebrew literature we find the terms "children of God" and "sons of God" used in the simple sense of the well-known beatitude, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God" (Mat. v, 9). If others are called sons of God, the argument here runs, why should not Jesus be called son of God? (The usual article "the" before son is lacking in verse 36.) Moreover, in one passage the Psalmist rises to the thought that if men are "children of God" in any vital sense they are in reality and potentially "gods" (Psalm lxxx, 6). This is the passage quoted in verse 34. Certainly with such sanction for it in their own Scriptures no Jew ought to object to the application of the term to Jesus.

In fact, in the early days of Jewish Christianity before the Christian gospel was translated into Greek no objection was raised to the term "son of God." Then, it was the term Messiah or Christ that aroused Jewish ire when applied to Jesus. It was to the Greek sense of the term "son of God" that the Jew (in Ephesus) displayed strenuous objection. That title in Greek implied an actual parental relationship. Jewish traditional views of Jehovah were extremely monotheistic. The bare idea that Jehovah could beget a son, *i.e.*, have progeny in any sense akin to mortals, was to the Jews altogether incredible. In contrast to the Greek, the Jew thought of God as an actual concrete person in the "image" and "likeness" of a man (Gen. i,

26, 27), but living in heaven and almighty in power. The thought that this Person could undergo the experience of parentage in begetting a son was inconsistent with the Jewish idea of the holiness and transcendence of God. It constituted an insoluble problem for the extreme monotheism of the Jews because it seemed to them to imply the possibility of two persons in the Godhead.

But the Greek, long trained in philosophy and moral science, easily grasped the idea that the parentage involved is not a parentage of the flesh nor has it anything to do with the flesh, but is a parentage of the spirit. God, the all-pervading immanent spirit enters into man and, if welcomed, begets in him a divine life. This Greek idea that God "is not far from each one of us" (Acts xvii, 27), if we, too, are spirit, made it particularly easy for the Greek to adopt the Christian word Father and the Christian idea of the fatherhood of God. They could be reminded that their "own poets have said: For we are also his offspring," *i.e.*, spirit of his Spirit (Acts xvii, 28). Thus calling Jesus son of God offered no stumbling-block to the Greek if the fact was manifest that the immanent God had really entered into him and by the parentage of the spirit generated in him a divine life. (Compare the statement of Epictetus quoted in our comments on the Prologue, that we are "fragments of God.") Neither Jew nor Greek had any difficulty over his own definition of the term "son of God"; and neither could endure the significance attached to the same term by the other.

Thus verses 37, 38 contain the second answer, intended for the Greeks, in defense of the title "son of God" as an appropriate one for Jesus. If his "works" (37) shows the presence in him of the Father Spirit, Jesus had earned the right to be called "son of God." Men are not asked "to believe on" Jesus because of any words spoken by him about his relation to the Father; his all-important credentials, says this Christian preacher of Ephesus to his hearers, are the men and women of your own acquaintance

who by "belief on him" through the parentage of the spirit have passed from death to life eternal and taken their places alongside this second Adam as sons of God, too.

There is much divergence of opinion as to the meaning of the word "work" or "works" in the Gospel of John. The plain inference here is that the works are a sufficient substitute basis of faith for those not able to be convinced on Jesus' word. Do "works" in this sense refer merely to the miracles of Jesus? Were the Palestine miracles the chief testimony to his Sonship for the hearers of this Christian preacher of Ephesus? Today, Jesus is practically the only one left, we believe, who ever in history performed a miracle, and the number recorded of him is a very small one. But hardly a day passed for these hearers of Ephesus without the news of some miracle that had taken place the day before within a hundred miles done by still another wonder-worker. Under these circumstances, miracles like the Palestine miracles were too common in the vicinity of Ephesus for much convert-making power to be extracted from them. Nowhere in the Gospel do we find a direct statement that the Palestine miracles proved Jesus was from God. In John v, 36 (see comments there) we read: "The works which the Father has given me to accomplish . . . bear testimony . . . that the Father has sent me." What are the works? There are many indications that the works which the evangelist has in mind are the "works" which the living Jesus was accomplishing in Ephesus. The story of the blind man concludes with the statement that since the world began it was never heard that any one opened the eyes of a man born blind (ix, 32). Viewing that sermon as a whole there can be no doubt that it sets no store by the miracle involved in this specific instance of the recovery of physical sight save as it serves as a symbol of the countless eye-opening "works" of Jesus in giving light to men spiritually blind from birth year after year since.

It might be said that there are in John two classes of "works" which may be viewed as "testimony" to the divine mission of Jesus. In class one are those works which in the present chapter are called "good works" (32). In this class belong also "the works of my Father" (37) and "works" which show that the Father is "in" him and he "in the Father" (38). This numberless host of daily ministrations of Jesus in the days of his flesh constituted an overpowering witness to his divine mission for those privileged to be present when they were performed. The intensely practical bent of mind of this Christian preacher of Ephesus crops out here again. At their distance in time and space from Palestine and the days of Jesus in the flesh, he makes bold to say to his hearers that "works" belonging to class two form the most convincing witness to the divine mission of Jesus, *i.e.*, the first-hand testimony of spiritual miracles of Christian experience in the lives of men and women of their acquaintance in Ephesus. It is doubtful whether the author ever points to a wonder in and of itself, *i.e.*, a supernatural marvel *per se* as proof of Jesus' mission. Some would even say that because of the currency of miracle stories in other religions in Ephesus John used the fewest possible and then only for the symbol they contained of the miracles of conversion occurring in Ephesus.

CHAPTER XIII

DEATH AND LIFE

JOHN XI

xi, 1. Now there was a man who was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, of the village of Mary and her sister Martha. 2. And it was that Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment. 4. When Jesus heard it, he said, This sickness is not to end in death, but is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it. 5. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. 7. So he says to the disciples, Let us go back to Judea. 8. The disciples say, The Jews have just been trying to stone you; and are you going back there? 9. Jesus answered, If a man walks in the daytime he does not stumble, because he can see the light of this world. 10. But if he walks in the night he stumbles, because he has no light. 11. After a while he added, Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep. 12. The disciples said, If he has fallen asleep he will recover. 14. So Jesus told them plainly, Lazarus is dead. 17. When Jesus reached the place he found that Lazarus had been in the tomb four days.

21. Martha said to Jesus, Master, if you had been here my brother would not have died. 23. Jesus says to her, Your brother shall rise again. 24. Martha says, I know he will rise in the resurrection at the Last Day. 25. Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life: he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live; 26. and he who lives and believes in me shall never die.

32. Mary also, when she came, fell at his feet saying,

Master, if you had been here my brother would not have died. 33. When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews weeping also, he was troubled, 34. and said, Where have you laid him? They say to him, Come and see. 35. Jesus wept. 37. Some of them said, Could not this man who opened the eyes of the blind man have also kept Lazarus from dying? 39. Jesus says, Move the stone away. Martha says, Master, by this time decay has set in, for he has been dead four days. 43. And Jesus called in a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. 44. The dead man came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-cloths. Jesus says, Loose him and let him go.

47. The Pharisees gathered a council and said, What are we going to do? This man is showing so many signs. 48. If we let him alone every one will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take our city. 49. Caiaphas, who was high priest, said, 50. It is better that one man should die for the people, rather than that the whole nation perish. 51. Being high priest, he prophesied unknowingly that Jesus was to die for the nation, 52. and not for the nation only, but that he might also unite in one body the children of God scattered far and wide.

The story of the raising of Lazarus has involved many a Bible student in more difficulty and question than any other chapter of John's Gospel. If chapter vi is the easiest to understand, this one is the hardest. Fortunately just here much new material has recently come to hand which will in time remove many previous obstacles. This is particularly fortunate because the principle on which John is at work in this chapter is the supreme truth of his Gospel and of his years of preaching. In fact, three superlatives apply to this chapter; it contains the greatest difficulty, it receives most light from modern research, it presents the most fundamental truth of John's religion.

John's expositions of his two basic words, "Light" and

"Life," take as their point of departure a story from the Palestinian memorabilia of Jesus, in the one case the healing of the blind man, and in the other the raising of Lazarus. Of the two words, Life is the more inclusive and the central one. The present chapter runs in many particulars parallel to that of the blind man. The blindness was "from his birth." Lazarus "had been in the tomb four days." The story of the blind man is punctuated and interpreted at its middle point by "I am the Light" (ix, 5); the story of Lazarus is interpreted at its middle point by "I am the Life" (xi, 25).

In the older view, two principal purposes or truths were embedded in the story. First, John wished to prove by his use of it the supernatural power of the earthly Jesus. He meant his hearers to construe the raising of Lazarus as an accomplishment beyond the power of any supernaturally unaided human being. In the second place, in the older view we are meant to understand from it that the human soul lives after death so conditioned that it may at any time reënter the body it has forsaken even though that body be already in a state of "decay" (39). Both these religious values thus obtained were very precious to early Christians. In commenting on the catacomb paintings of the raising of Lazarus, Lamberton says: "It was a pleasant hope in which to die, this hope that Christ himself would call his servants from the catacombs as he had called Lazarus from his tomb." On a trip through the catacombs of Rome it is still possible to count over fifty pictured likenesses of Lazarus in those underground passages.

The contribution of material that has recently come to hand to the understanding of the story of the raising of Lazarus is far-reaching and fundamental. Practically all the results of research into the mystery religions has a direct or indirect bearing upon this chapter. In particular the native religion of the heart of Asia Minor, the Mysteries of Attis, throws light upon the thoughts that the

people of Ephesus were thinking in regard to life here and hereafter.

The principal annual festival of this religion in its primitive days was held every spring at the turn of the seasons from winter to summer. It was essentially a celebration of the passing of the cold inanimateness of the winter and the warming up of the life and the coming back of fruitfulness with the spring. All nature rejoiced, and few men could resist the impulse to share in the gladness. On a set day the people went forth into a grove and chose the ceremonial tree. A pine tree was selected because its winter foliage conveyed a suggestion of the persistence of life. This tree was cut down and was then enswathed tightly so that it looked like a corpse wrapped for its burial. It was carried by the priests in popular procession to the temple of the deity and buried with pomp and ceremony. On a future day, the great day of the festival, the pine tree was taken from its grave, the grave-cloths were loosed, the pine tree appeared in life again, and the people gave themselves over to unlimited gayety in celebration of the return once more of the springtime life and gladness.

The legend on which this ceremony rested tells how the goddess Cybele lost her youthful and handsome lover, who had killed himself for her sake. She mourned until the gods took pity upon her and restored her beloved Attis to life again. Her joy was unmeasured at receiving her lover back. Cybele represented mother Earth, Attis the germinating power of life. Thus the returning freshness and beauty of the earth at the coming of the spring was allegorized into an appealing love story.

From early days the ceremonies spoke through certain turns of the allegory of a life after death for the individual. The new life of nature in the springtime after the deathlikeness of the winter was both symbol and proof that a man though he die yet shall he live. As the Mysteries of Attis developed from a primitive into a more

mature religion, part of the instruction which all initiates received was intended to insure them safe passage from this life into the circle of the blessed in the after world.

In New Testament times along with other mystery religions it had acquired a distinctly mystical note of a personal, very practical character. Bits of liturgy and ceremony extant show plainly that the participant in the Attis mysteries came away feeling that at the time of the ceremony a new power flowed into him, giving him new strength and new life. (See comments on John iii, 3.) The legend of the restoration of Attis became a type or symbol of the restoration to pristine zest of life possible to the world-weary. The blossoming of the dead earth each year into the virgin freshness of primeval days became a token that a man's life, whatever his age, is destined to reblossom after every period of winter and of cold—even after the winter of death.

The national ancestral Greek religion, the Eleusinian Mysteries, centered its ritual around the familiar legend of Persephone, a beautiful young maiden. She was gathering flowers in the fields one day as Aides or Pluto, the god of the underworld, happened to pass by. He fell in love with Persephone and carried her away to the world of the dead where he made her his queen. Her mother, Demeter, symbolic of mother Earth, carried her grief to Zeus, the "father of gods and men," who called Pluto to account for his theft. Pluto's reply was to the effect that possession is nine points of the law. The matter was finally settled by a compromise. Persephone was to spend six months of each year with her captor in the world of the dead; then she was to be allowed to return to the world of the living to spend the other six months with her mother.

It is easy to see and admire the effectiveness of the symbolism of the story. The joy and bloom of the springtime mirror a mother's happiness at the return of her daughter from the world of the dead. Another legend, the

legend of Orpheus, who, after he had won permission by his beautiful music to visit the world of the dead, brought back his beloved Euridice to the threshold of life, was also widely used as the basis of religious ceremonial in Greece. But Persephone was the central figure. Her restoration to life, her liberation from the power of death, became the basis of instruction in the Eleusinian Mysteries by which its initiates were not only assured of immortality, but posted so well in regard to the underworld that they would be able to find their way through the purlieus of Hades into the abode of the blessed. They would go through the winter of death only to emerge into a springtime of new life.

Furthermore, the Eleusinian Mysteries as a religion emphasized the change wrought in a man by this assurance of a blessed future. Aristophanes gives us a side glance at it: "All we who have been initiated and live in a pious way."[1] An initiated member found that he had a firmer grip upon life and its possible triumph over death. His character was strengthened; his self-control was increased; his sense of brotherhood with his fellow members was intensified. To this was added the mystical note of Stoicism, particularly in the last century before Christ. This contribution of Stoicism may be defined as (a) the practice and belief that God is an immanent divine spirit dwelling in the world; and (b) that men by opening their hearts can gain access to him and receive unto themselves a fullness of life which will raise them above all the suffering of the world and the flesh and death. If they thus live the life possessed of that fullness here upon earth, that life will take them naturally and easily through the gateway of death into the bosom of the divine.

A third mystery religion, the Mysteries of Isis, was also widely influential in the Roman Empire in the first century. This religion had its origin in Egypt, where the heat of summer is as much to be feared as the cold of

[1] See Case, pp. 294-5.

winter. The regular annual overflowing of the Nile was the indispensable basis of their existence. Every year the Nile, in flood, spread over the valley carrying destruction in its path. Yet this which at its overflowing was such a terror became on its subsidence the source of life, for in its path, vegetation sprang up and thrived in what would have been but a piece of the Sahara desert.

The religion of Isis made this Nile flood a basis for teaching that out of death comes life, that our physical death is like the terror of the floods, that when the waters of death have receded life will blossom in renewed freshness and fruitfulness. As this religion aged, it developed the same personal, very practical character noted in the other mystery religions. As surely as the overflow of the Nile which lays low and destroys is followed by the receding waters which bring life, so surely shall despair and difficulty and moral apathy recede for a man upon his entrance into the religion of Isis; and out of that recession shall come a newness of life and a fullness of living as far above the old life as the green fields of Egypt are more to be desired than the desert and the flood.

But again in the Mysteries of Isis, as in the other mystery religions, connection is made between a natural event and the religious lesson drawn from it by a bridge of legend. Its ritual, which became so popular in Greek lands, told the story of Isis and Osiris. The old Egyptian legend symbolizing the after fruitfulness of the Nile flood told how Isis, the queen goddess, had a lover named Osiris. At the death of Osiris she was inconsolable. The passing days made it plain that her grief would not be pacified until her lover was finally restored to life again. At this early stage, the restoration of Osiris symbolized the receding waters in whose wake the beautiful spring vegetation appeared; in the developed religion the restoration of Osiris as standing for the recession of the Nile flood advanced another stage as a symbol denoting now the power of this religion, when the despairs of life or the flood

of death come down upon us to overwhelm, to effect the recession of that flood and cause the beauteous new life to appear.

The Mysteries of Attis, the Eleusinian Mysteries, the Mysteries of Isis, all emphasize this same basic teaching that death is the door to life, as winter is the door to spring. A fourth body of religious teaching, the Hermetic Mystery Literature, is also of value to us, for it gives the vocabulary employed to fill in this conception of the superior divine life which men may receive in the present through communion with the Divine Spirit.[2] Throughout the Roman Empire, but particularly in Ephesus and Asia Minor, the substance of this teaching was current and common.

The bearing of the widespread currency of this teaching on the understanding of the story of Lazarus is that John's hearers would be interested in the story not as a proof of the supernatural power of the earthly Jesus, nor primarily as a proof of a resurrecton in the future. Instead, they would naturally and instinctively endeavor to interpret it by means of the interpretations in use among them of the story of Attis and the stories of the other religions mentioned. They would seek to understand it primarily as a message in regard to the winter death of ordinary existence and a following spring which would be an utter contrast in its vitality. This is all theory and unfulfilled desire with you, said John to them. It is glorious reality to these men and women of your acquaintance on whom this gift of eternal life has been bestowed through their belief in Jesus.

Our whole Christian teaching in regard to the resurrection and eternal life acquires a new and vivid concreteness in the Christian advantage taken by John of these religious developments which prepared the way for the Christian religion. To one who knows that history and the meaning of the terms which he puts to new Christian

[2] Case, p. 328.

use, the resurrection life is not an aching desire, about which nothing can be done but wait; it is a fact of present experience.

In the telling of the story of Lazarus, John does not state that he was himself present. He selects this day's work out of the wealth of tradition concerning Jesus because of its striking convert-making possibilities in dealing with inquirers brought up in these mystery religions. The older view of the gospels that they were each composed in their entirety by one man has given way to a more democratic and social view of their authorship. They are now viewed as collections of the best information in circulation known to their respective authors at the time of their composition. Likewise, John selected with great religious insight those stories which he felt were best calculated to reflect and impress the power of Jesus upon some considerable body of his hearers in Ephesus. "Many other signs Jesus showed" (xx, 30). John could choose only a limited few. He chose this one because he saw tremendous significance for those of his audience trained in the mystery religions. Naturally, in the telling, he aimed to present its religious content in the way that they could get the most religious benefit from it.

In its appealing picture of the human side of Jesus the story of Lazarus served another main interest of John which was to counteract a strong Ephesian tendency to over-emphasize Jesus' deity at the expense of his humanity. The mention of Mary and Martha (*Cf.*, Luk. x, 38 ff.) links the story with the synoptic tradition. The cross reference in verse 2, "that Mary who anointed the Lord," is evidence again of the informal oral character of this Gospel. Its assumption of a knowledge of events which have not yet been narrated (*Cf.*, also iii, 24) implies that other sermons had narrated and discussed these events. Another domestic touch of rare beauty is found in verse 5, "Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus." Incidentally, that word "loved" is the same form used in the

reference to the "disciple whom Jesus loved" (*Cf.*, xiii, 23). The purpose of John's Gospel is that "you may have life" (xx, 31); and his purpose in the use of this particular narrative is "that the Son of God may be glorified" (xi, 4) as "the resurrection and the life" (25).

Our inquiry into the mystery religions makes it clear that many of John's hearers came hungry, with a hunger acquired elsewhere than from Christian sources, for a new and different life that would be life indeed. He proclaimed to them all that Jesus was that Life embodied and the secret of how to obtain the new and different life which they were seeking could be learned, therefore, from him alone.

When his disciples take exception to his decision to respond to the call of duty from the family at Bethany on the score that it will put his own life into jeopardy, Jesus replies to this effect: There are twelve hours in every day's life of smooth sailing; and for getting about in those twelve hours, the light of guidance which is the product of prudential calculations seems to answer very well. But when the night of difficult and dangerous travel falls, then the worthlessness of that light as illumination is shown up by the way that the men who trust it stumble. For safe travel through the night of difficulty and danger, a man needs the light that lighteth the way into life eternal bestowed on those who "believe on Jesus."

Verse 11 contains the word which Christians adopted throughout the Roman Empire as their word for the Christian's graduation from earth. They said of a man who was a Christian not that he was "dead," but that he is fallen asleep (I Thess. iv, 13; Acts vii, 60). "Death" meant to them the deadness of ordinary existence (Rom. vii, 11, 13; I Tim. v, 6) in antithesis to Life which meant to them the life eternal whose invigoration will never give out. The misunderstanding voiced in verse 12 is like the misunderstanding of Nicodemus (iii, 4) or of the Samaritan woman (iv, 5).

Verses 18 ff. continue the narrative and lead up to the important and central theme in verses 23-27, which is the contrast between the older Christian teaching regarding the resurrection and the newer view of John's day.

The early Christian idea of the resurrection as reflected in the synoptic gospels was in close affiliation with the Old Testament and later Jewish conception. The Jews expected at that future day and date when Jehovah established his messianic kingdom all righteous Jews who had died would rise from Sheol and from their graves, to share in the triumph. The early Christian idea differed in that the blessings and joys of the kingdom which it magnified, also, were spiritual by nature rather than physical. Paul came in contact with, and was influenced by, the Greek idea that as men have in them a spark of the divine which comes from God, their souls go at death not to Sheol, but into the presence of God. He speaks of "having the desire to depart and be with Christ" (Phil. i, 23), an indication that he had come to think of the future life as non-physical. Yet he does not give up his Jewish idea of a day when men shall rise from their graves. He solves the problem of combining the two ideas, the Jewish apocalyptic future, and the Greek non-physical future life, in his pronouncement that on Judgment Day those who are then alive in the flesh will be "changed" (I Cor. xv, 51) (without going through the experience of death) so that all future life shall be uniformly spiritual. We must not expect to find in Paul an exclusive devotion to either of these conceptions of the future. Both the Jewish earthly future and the Greek spiritual idea can be found side by side in his thought.

In John, the Christian gospel has completed the transition to the spiritual point of view. John believes that the blessing of eternal life is bestowed upon Christians in their days in the flesh, not conferred by a physical resurrection at a future Day. But John never attacked the apocalyptic idea. Like Paul, he was ready to become all

things to all men if he might by any legitimate means win them to Christ. So, he made good use of a liberating power which has freed many a slave of literalism in every age. He did not deny the apocalyptic view of the Judgment, but construed and interpreted it as spiritual imagery. It was an age of transition and his audiences contained both Greek- and Jewish-minded people. He made the Jewish apocalyptic view of the future a symbol of the Greek. He did his best not to cause "one of these disciples" to stumble. Yet he made very plain where he himself stood. This has been set forth at length in the comments on John v, 24-29.

Verses 23, 24 contain the older view. "He shall rise again in the resurrection at the Last Day." Facing it squarely in verse 25, is the newer view that "He who believes in me shall never die" (26. *Cf.*, "would not have died," 21 and 32). Goodspeed's words in commenting on this passage (quoting Scott) are substantially as follows: "Martha expresses (in 24) the faith of the early Church that dying believers shall rise again at the last day. Over against this, Jesus declares that the life he imparts is unaffected by physical death (26). 'Those who believe in him have risen already; their death is only in seeming and they carry with them into the world beyond the same life on which they entered here' (Scott). The ultimate resurrection 'is not the commencement but simply the manifestation of the new life' (Scott). This departure from the old apocalyptic conception of the resurrection (as in store for us men at some indefinite future date) is an outstanding feature of the recasting of early Christian belief which is in process in the gospel of John."

"Jesus wept" (35). The older view explained these words as expressive of simple sorrow at the family tragedy. Of modern commentators some emphasize the fact "that even here Jesus stands apart from and above human grief," "a divine being who . . . contemplates the earthly tragedy," while others explain that he is weeping over the

lack of faith on the part of the "Jews" (33). But he who sits down with the rest of the congregation in the Christian church at Ephesus will soon be sensible in that Gnostic atmosphere that one of John's chief concerns here is to accent the human side of Jesus. So he takes pains to let them know that heavenly Lord whom they were worshiping has the compassionate heart of a sorrowing friend.

There is difference of opinion as to John's objective here. Paul addressed an audience accustomed to the point of view of Mark's gospel and made it his purpose to glorify Jesus as a supernatural being at the right hand of God. Was that John's object? Or was John addressing an audience accustomed to the Pauline teaching developed by years of contact in a Gnostic atmosphere with mystery religions; and did he, therefore, emphasize the historical origins of the Christian religion and magnify the richness of humanity in Jesus of Nazareth, in order to establish a personal loyalty to Jesus which would serve as a counterbalance for their mystic experiences? In this latter case John's purpose in drawing attention to the fact that Jesus wept was to impress upon his listeners that so far from being coldly and distantly superhuman no Ephesian was too obscure for his personal loss or tragedy to bring sorrow to that sympathizing Friend.

In verse 37, the Greek idea recurs that more light and fuller is the way of salvation. If Jesus is the Logos-Light of the world (*Cf.*, xi, 9, 10), according to the Greek thought of the day, he must be the source of life and giver of that higher divine "fullness" of life which comes from the light of knowledge. "This man who opened the eyes of the blind man" (37) would be able to replenish, for Lazarus, his ebbing store of the light of life and thus save him from the darkness of death.

John's insistence that no Christian ever dies is repeated again and again. Here is no teaching that Jesus will call men from their graves in the great resurrection, but that Jesus is the bearer to men of a kind of life that never gives

in to but always conquers death. Acquaintance with the mystery religions and with the contrast between Jewish apocalyptic and Greek Stoicism points indisputably to this conclusion.

In verses 47-53 John turns from the death of Lazarus and brings his hearers face to face with the death of Jesus. From this point on, in the Gospel, all that is said and done sustains an intimate relation with the death of Jesus. Possibly the author was swayed by its happy ending in making the story of Lazarus the vestibule to his treatment of the passion and death of Jesus. Uttered as a pretext by the high priest, John interprets the plea for Jesus' death, and his "not for that nation only" (52) becomes the forerunner of the later, "If I am lifted up I will draw all men to me" (xii, 32).

Tennyson in his well-known lines upon the story of Lazarus addresses himself to the critic and begs him not to mar its beauty as a picture to which is linked a "truth divine."

O thou that after toil and storm
  Mayst seem to have reach'd a purer air,
  Whose faith has centre everywhere
Nor cares to fix itself to form,

Leave thou thy sister, when she prays,
  Her early Heaven, her happy views;
  Nor thou with shadow'd hint confuse
A life that leads melodious days.

Her faith thro' form is pure as thine,
  Her hands are quicker unto good;
  O, sacred be the flesh and blood
To which she links a truth divine!

See thou, that countest reason ripe
  In holding by the law within,
  Thou fail not in a world of sin,
And ev'n for want of such a type.[3]

[3] Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, xxxiii.

Historical study bears Tennyson out in his plea that the story of Lazarus is a "form" by which simple faith lays firm hold of a vital truth. We can all agree that the purpose of the story is to show that Jesus is the bearer to men of a life that never gives in to death, and in particular to show that the risen life which was formerly expected as a blessing of the Messianic Age may be realized immediately in the present through the power of Jesus, even as Martha's hope that he "will rise" in the resurrection changed at the behest of Jesus from a distant hope into an immediate joy.

CHAPTER XIV

THE ANOINTING AND THE FOOT WASHING

JOHN XII AND XIII

xii, 1. Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany. 2. So they gave a dinner for him there: and Martha did the serving; and Lazarus was one of those who reclined at the table with him. 3. And Mary took a pound of perfumed ointment of pure nard, very precious, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and then wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. 4. Judas Iscariot, the disciple who was going to betray him, says, 5. Why was not this perfume sold for fifty dollars, and given to the poor? 7. Jesus said, Let her alone; let her keep it for the day of my preparation for burial. 8. The poor you have always with you; but me you have not always.

The character of the Gospel gradually changes in the later chapters, which differ considerably from the earlier. The topical series of talks that form the body of the book, which began with those on marriage and birth, and cover the range of daily life as represented by water, illness, food, light, has ended with a sermon on death. The next two chapters, xii and xiii, however, contain further examples of John's ability to insert religious symbolism into an event of the ministry of Jesus. The narrative of the anointing of Jesus even in the Gospel of Mark has its peculiar significance beyond the face value of the incident. The washing of the disciples' feet is also given as an

"example" (xiii, 15) of a principle which they are thus enjoined to adopt and practice among themselves.

Several reasons led John to include the anointing. In the first place, the anointing was a symbolic act over and above the intention of its doer. It was not merely an expression of devotion, for her act turned out even better than she intended. "She has anointed my body beforehand for the burying" (Mar. xiv, 8; *Cf.*, John xii, 7). In the second place, the words of Jesus, "Me you have not always," fit in perfectly with his instinct that the path of approach to the passion and death of Jesus should be a solemnly appropriate one. In the third place, it is easy to believe that John was eager to have his small personal share in the fulfillment of the prophecy of Jesus that "Wherever the gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, that which this woman has done shall be spoken of." (See comments on xviii, 9.) Incidentally this is one more confirmation of the position that the contents of John's Gospel were "preached" and that the Gospel is a collection of spiritual lessons that he drew from the stores of memorabilia of Jesus known to him.

The story of the anointing furnishes a most intricate problem for those who are interested in reconciling the differences in the four gospels. There are four stories of anointing, one in each of the four gospels. The narratives in Mark xiv and Matthew xxvi are practically identical. Matthew has taken over Mark's wording; and the two may be considered as one. The anointing according to Mark and Matthew both is an anointing of Jesus' head. In Luke vii, it is his feet which are anointed; likewise in John xii. This might lead to the inference that John's account is more closely related to the Lukan than to the Markan. But such is not the case. The differences between John and Luke are so fundamental and extensive as to show that John made little or no use of the Lukan account. In Luke the woman is a sinner; in John's Gospel she is Mary, sister of Martha. In Luke the cost of the ointment is not

mentioned and plays no part in the story; in John it is central.

On the other hand, comparison shows that John's narrative follows closely the Mark-Matthew one. In both the supper is in Bethany. In both the cost is "fifty dollars." In both objection is raised on the score of the cost; and in both the "poor" are mentioned. Likewise in both the anointing is given a reference by anticipation to the death and burial of Jesus. John's story coincides with Mark's even to the use of such a very peculiar expression as "pure nard" (John xii, 3; Mar. xiv, 3).

Yet John declares that the feet were anointed. Older commentators decided that the woman anointed both head and feet on the same occasion. Godet says: "After the anointing in the ordinary form, that of the head, this bathing of the feet with perfume began." Even Westcott implies the same idea when he says: "The Synoptists mention only the pouring on the head." Study of New Testament times and in particular of the Gospel of John has now reached a point where the explanation seems probable that an Oriental scene given correctly in Mark has been translated into its Western equivalent for the benefit of its Ephesian audience in the Fourth Gospel. Any one who has visited Palestine knows that people there eat at a table which is raised about one foot from the floor, and are seated upon rugs with their feet underneath them. The same practice approximately was the custom of the ancient Jews. During supper it would be practically impossible to anoint or even to touch any diner's feet. On the other hand, the Greek and Roman custom at a banquet was to recline at full length on the left elbow with the feet of each banqueter spread out behind the back of the one reclining next. Under these circumstances, no woman would try to reach the head of one reclining at the table; but his feet could be easily bathed or anointed without attracting any general notice.

Anointing of the head was the immemorial custom among

the Jews (*Cf.*, Ps. xxiii), while anointing of the feet was similarly familiar among the Greeks.[1]

Older commentators of Luke sought to prove that the custom of reclining had found its way into Jerusalem, and that the supper attended by Jesus might have been held in the Western style (Luke vii). This is not at all impossible (*Cf.*, Amos vi, 4; Ezek. xxiii, 41). It does not help us, however, to understand why John's account here follows Mark's and Matthew's so closely as to clearly indicate the same written source, yet makes this one change.

Even where literary dependence seems plainest as here we must beware of treating John's account as if it had been compiled in a library. It is rather one of many versions of the same story in oral circulation among the people. Our gospels are not the sources of Christian tradition, but reflect the form which that tradition had taken at the time in the locality in which a particular gospel was given a fixed written dress. Early Christianity was a living organism, growing by adapting itself to its new environment among the peoples. When Luther translated the Bible into the vernacular, he gave back, as Deissmann says, to the German people that which in origin and character belonged to common people.[2]

According to his custom, John may have also preferred the story as given in Mark for its richer allusions. The hearer's heart is sympathetically "filled with the fragrance" of the beautiful deed. The well-known Mary performs the act. It is Judas who mars the occasion with his objection. Mary stands for utter, unquestioning, personal devotion in all the gospel accounts (*Cf.*, Luk. x, 39, 42). The very name of Judas starts in the mind thoughts of Jesus' betrayal and death. In the shadow of the cross, in unconscious rebuke of his unfaithfulness personified, she gives her most precious possession free-heartedly. She

[1] Aristophanes, *Wasps*, 607.
[2] Deissmann, II, 4.

could not save him from death, but she did what she could; and Jesus gave to her act a significance far beyond her fondest dreams.

THE GRAIN OF WHEAT AND THE HARVEST
JOHN XII, 20-32

xii, 20. There were some Greeks among those who went up to the festival; 21. and they came to Philip and said, We want to see Jesus. 22. Philip comes and tells Andrew: Andrew comes, and Philip, and they tell Jesus. 23. Jesus answers them with the words, The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24. I tell you, Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains a solitary grain; but if it dies it brings a harvest. 25. He who loves his own life loses it; and he who hates his life in the world will preserve it for the Life eternal. 27. My soul is troubled. What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour! Yet it was for this very purpose that I came to this hour. 32. If I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men toward myself.

After the anointing with its foretokening of Jesus' death, John introduces a scene in which three fundamental teachings concerning his death are combined. The Greeks (20) are but a few of many who must have been present in Jerusalem. Yet these few inquiring Greeks proved to be the first of great hosts of succeeding Greek inquirers throughout the Empire. Right in Ephesus, at the time this Gospel acquired written form, Greeks were coming to this or that Christian disciple (*Cf.*, Philip in verse 21) to say that they would like to know more about Jesus (21). And the death on the cross made the strongest first bad impression of Jesus upon them and often was the last barrier to fall between them and full surrender to him."

John never gives any theological view, on the one hand, of the atonement, nor on the other hand does he defend

it in a merely negative way as does the Book of Acts on the ground that the Old Testament prophesied that he must suffer. For other men, death is an act of resignation that comes hard to many, and easy to a few. John always presents the death in positive fashion. His thought is that the death of Jesus was not a piece of resignation, but an act of supreme self-dedication, his greatest achievement and the climax of his life. Furthermore, he always presents the death in terms to show that Jesus hoped and expected that this supreme act of self-assertion would contribute the final element that would render his appeal to men irresistible. The serpent in the wilderness saving lives and uplifted for all to see and be saved (iii, 14), the shepherd letting his life go and saving the lives of his sheep (x, 15), are examples of John's point of view. Similarly, here the grain of wheat and the first harvest of thirty, sixty and an hundredfold (Mar. iv, 8) and the second harvest of thirty times thirty, sixty times sixty and one hundred times one hundred, and so on in geometrical progression again pictures the endless chain of power to reproduce itself, which is one of the most outstanding properties of life.

This basic point of view of his is associated by John with two other thoughts concerning Jesus' death. One of these is the well-known "doubly attested" saying of Jesus occurring, indeed, five times in Matthew, Mark and Luke, "He who loses his life shall find it." In his own death Jesus was carrying out his own teaching in this regard. In verse 25 it is the man who is not over-anxious about that side of his life to which this world's goods minister who finds the higher spiritual life, the Life eternal. Two words are used for "life" here and they are quite distinct and different in meaning. In the translation above, Life of the higher character is capitalized but life of the lower sort is not. An approximately exact, literal translation preserving this difference in the original words would read, "He who loves himself loses his soul, while

he who spurns the wordly way of existence will preserve his soul for the Life eternal."

Finally the likening of his death to the endless reproducing power of the buried grain of wheat enables John to recur to a favorite thought with him that the cross raised Jesus to such a height that all the world might "see" him. Seeing him there, it would learn to recognize him without fail as the bearer of Eternal life. "If I am lifted up from the earth I will draw all men toward myself" (32). This explains the use of the word "see" in verse 21.

That is the threefold content in the account of the visit of the Greeks to see Jesus; first, the endless power of reproducing life of the same species wrapped up in the buried grain of wheat; second, the word of Jesus that he who lets his life go shall find that he has not lost it; and third, the cross an exaltation which raised Jesus to a height where all the world is able to get a look at him and is able to understand the language of his hanging there, *i.e.*, that in his death he stands revealed as the possessor of Eternal life and, therefore, the bearer of endless power to reproduce life of the same species in as many as see and believe on him.

WASHING THE DISCIPLES' FEET

JOHN XIII, 4-17

xiii, 4. Jesus rises from supper and removes his outer garments; and he takes a towel and ties it around his waist. 5. Then he pours water into the basin, and he began to wash the disciples' feet. 8. Peter says to him, You shall never wash my feet. Jesus answered, Unless I wash you, you have no share with me. 9. Peter says to him, Then, not my feet only, but also my hands and my face. 10. Jesus says to him, Any one who has bathed has only to wash his feet to be entirely clean; and you have already bathed.

12. When he had washed their feet and returned to

supper, he said, Do you understand what I have been doing? 13. You call me Teacher and Master. 14. If I then have washed your feet you also ought to wash each other's feet. 15. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. 16. A servant is not greater than his master; nor an apostle greater than the one who has sent him. 17. If you understand these things, blessed are you if you do them.

The washing of the disciples' feet is pure symbol—the most striking instance, perhaps, in the entire Gospel. Besides, therefore, its great religious value in itself, it contributes a strong element of confirmation to other testimony that symbol is prominent throughout.

Any and every customary washing of the feet would have taken place before the meal. In Luke's account of the anointing of Jesus' feet, Jesus turns to his host and says, "I entered into your house, you gave me no water for my feet" (Luk. vii, 44), as a reminder of a failure in hospitality on his part. In Jesus' time, as today in those parts of the world, the sandals worn for shoes were removed or changed upon entering the house. Such sandals were quite insufficient to keep the dust of the dirt roads from soiling the feet; and washing of the feet after a journey and before eating was as common as washing of the hands in America.

The supper mentioned is not the Passover supper, for the meal here described is said to have occurred on the day "before the feast" (xiii, 1). The relation of this supper to the Passover and the difference, also, in chronology between Mark and John will be discussed in the comments on John xviii. It is clear, however, without any discussion, that the foot-washing occurred on the last night; and, therefore, at Jesus' last supper. Just as in i, 19-34, John assumes and does not state that Jesus was baptized, so here he assumes and makes no direct statement that Jesus ate the last supper with the disciples. All his

references to the inauguration of the Lord's Supper as a sacrament and all his words regarding the Eucharist are contained in the account of the feeding of the multitude in vi, 1-65.

Rising from supper Jesus takes a towel, pours water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of the disciples. When he gets to him, Simon Peter objects. Jesus answered, Unless I wash you, you have no share with me. Plainly this ceremonial is heavy with a significance that will be searched for in vain in the physical sphere.

The time of Jesus' passing is fast approaching. How are they going to get along together under the new conditions? What farewell counsel can he give them that will strengthen them where they are weak, perhaps where they are weakest? Thoughts of this kind must have been running through the mind of Jesus as that last supper began.

United only would they be able to stand; divided they would surely fall. Teamwork together is the only way that they can pull through the persecution that awaits them.

Jesus has himself gained first place by taking last. Not by chance. That is one of the first and foremost principles of his gospel. They call him Teacher, truly, for he has sat at their feet and put far more time and thought into his study of them and their ways than all of them put together have wrestled in study to become letter perfect in his gospel. They call him Master, truly, for they have been his masters and their dead conservatism has forced him to slave in their service, if haply he might open a slit for each of them through which they could look out and see correctly the change wrought in life by this reversal of the everyday standards used by them to measure its good and harm.

"Do you understand what he has done?" John asks his hearers in Ephesus. A careful study of the significance for John of this act throws light on the character of his whole view of Jesus' ministry. In reality the expla-

nation takes the form and is as much pure symbol as the act itself. Verse 15 contains that explanation: He has given them an example that they also should do as he has done. This explanation must not be taken literally. To be sure the act itself has been literally copied by some branches of the Christian church. The Greek Catholic Church still does so at Easter time in Jerusalem. Upon a raised platform the patriarch before a multitude of people bathes the feet of his ecclesiastical confreres. It cannot be denied that it forms one of the most impressive scenes of the whole Easter festival. Many spectators unthinkingly assume this rendering of literal obedience to Jesus' command is the sole purpose of this modern ceremony. It would be more generous to the Greek Catholic Church to say that in this instance the literal obedience is secondary and subordinate to the wish to keep alive in the hearts of its people this principle of Jesus' teaching by this annual repetition of the act that gave it birth.

However that be, neither Jesus nor John had in mind that Christians would ever "wash one another's feet" and call that following the example set by Jesus on this occasion. But John gives no other explanation, it may be replied. He trusts his readers to use their Christian intuition and to understand that the explanation itself is as much pure symbol as the act explained. "You ought to wash one another's feet" does but turn prose into poetry, the prose principle being that a Christian obtains first place by taking last and doing what his necessities require, however humble and menial, for the benefit of a neighbor or brother.

THE BELOVED DISCIPLE

JOHN XIII, 23-26

xiii, 23. There was at the table reclining in Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. 24. Simon Peter beckons to him, and says to him, Tell us who it is of whom he speaks. 25. He leaned back, as he was, on

Jesus' breast and says to him, Master, who is it? 26. Jesus answers, It is the one for whom I dip a piece of bread and give it to him.

"Reclining in Jesus' bosom" (23) indicates simply that the disciple mentioned occupied the place next below Jesus, or, as we would say, at Jesus' right. Their manner of sitting or reclining at table has been described in our comments on the anointing, xii, 1-8. "Leaned back, as he was, on Jesus' breast" (25) tells us that at the moment in question the disciple moved his head and shoulders backward so that his head rested on Jesus' chest and his mouth was close to Jesus' ear.

Who was the disciple "whom Jesus loved"? The question has been discussed at length in a previous chapter on authorship. As noted there, part of the present passage is quoted in the appendix of the Gospel (xxi, 7, 20) where the statement is made that this is the one who "wrote" the Gospel. Outside of his appearance there we meet this unnamed character only three times (xiii, 23; xix, 26; xx, 2). Yet in this picture he is closer to the heart of Jesus than Simon Peter himself. Bacon in his "Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate" points out that the other three gospels present the one, *i.e.* "synoptic," view of Jesus based upon the Gospel of Mark; that the Gospel of Mark is the written monument, containing the substance of Peter's preaching; that the description of the beloved one who has closer communion with Jesus than Peter tallies closely with that of the disciple author who knows Jesus in the way that this Fourth Gospel knows him. In other words, Bacon's interpretation of verses 23-26 is that they voice a claim of superiority for the Fourth Gospel over the other three, in keeping with the first place in his confidence over the other disciples given by Jesus to its author.

The Beloved Disciple in turn becomes for Bacon the first of a long line of Christian disciples who recognize

the superficial secondary character of the Markan or Petrine Gospel, as they come closer to the heart of Jesus with this Fourth Gospel and commune with Jesus in mystic intimacy, understand the inner meaning of his words and learn his secret thoughts. He has stated this in much better language and at far greater length than can be done here.[3]

That verses 23-26 do imply that the Fourth Gospel comes closer to the heart of Jesus in the estimation of its Ephesian hearers, who gave it written form to preserve it, than the Gospel of Mark and the other two, seems to be a conclusion hard to escape. But Bacon is not ready to admit that this Fourth Gospel can be the work of an actual companion of Jesus in the days of his flesh. His conclusion, therefore, is that the author speaks here in a parable and the "Beloved Disciple" pictured in mystic communion and conversation with Jesus is a creation of his own mind and not one of the flesh-and-blood persons present at the supper. On the other hand, Burkitt, Delff, Deissmann, Garvie, Burney and those others mentioned in our chapter on the Authorship, hold that the Beloved Disciple was not this literary fiction, but an actual historical person. Our own reasons for believing that the Gospel may have been written by this historical Beloved Disciple have been given in the earlier chapter.

[3] See Bacon, pp. 210-331.

CHAPTER XV

JESUS' RELATION TO HIS DISCIPLES

JOHN XIV TO XVII

xiv, 1. Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, and believe in me. 2. In my Father's house are many abiding-places; I am going away to prepare a place for you. 3. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come back again and take you to be with me; so that you may be where I am. 4. And you know the way to the abode where I am going. 5. Thomas says to him, Master, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way? 6. Jesus says to him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one comes to the Father except through me. 9. He who has seen me has seen the Father. 10. I live in the Father, and the Father in me. The words which I speak to you I speak not from myself: but the Father abiding in me is doing his own works. 12. He who believes in me will himself do the works that I am doing; and still greater works than these will he do. 13. And whatever you shall ask in my name, I will do. 16. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you a further Helper, even the Spirit: which the world cannot receive; for the world does not recognize it or know it. 18. I will not leave you friendless or alone; I will come to you. 19. In a little while the world will see me no more, but you will see me. 20. In that day you will know that I am in the Father, and you in me, and I in you. 21. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him, and will reveal myself to him. 22. Judas, not Iscariot, says to him, You will reveal yourself to us and not to the world?

23. Jesus answered, Any one who loves me, will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our abode with him.

26. The Helper, that is the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. 27. Peace be with you; my peace I give to you: not as the world gives do I give you. Do not let your hearts be troubled. 28. You heard me say, I go away, and I return to you.

In chapters xiv to xvii, the close and vital relations existing between Christians and the risen Jesus and through him with God supply the subject matter. The whole section has been characterized as a Christological essay. But it does not appear to have been composed as a unit. It is rather a collection made up of several parts. The last verse of chapter xiv, "Arise, let us go hence," distinctly indicates the end of one section. Similarly we have in xvii, 1, an introduction to another.

Chapter xiv takes the answer of the author of the Fourth Gospel to the question, "Will Christ come again?" and, according to his common practice, pictures Jesus talking for Ephesus. The problem of the Second Coming grew more and more acute during the progress of the first century. The veteran leader of Ephesus showed great tact in handling other solutions but left his hearers in no doubt as to his own. This chapter contains perhaps the highest and most spiritual answer which any early Christian leader ever gave to the ever-recurring question of the return of Jesus.

The well-understood significance of the "I" style of the Gospel, used throughout this chapter, has been explained at length in the comments on chapter x. Preparatory work for its understanding occurs, also, in the comments on v, 19-29, and in the chapter, The Popular Quality of the Gospel. The "I" style is intended by its user to con-

vey the utter sincerity of his conviction that the reading of the chapter in the life of Jesus thus presented has Jesus in person behind it. To reproduce the impression which it made at the time on its original hearers, it is best to observe four distinct rules in this and the following chapters. First, bear constantly in mind that this Gospel is based on popular oral testimony, that this material was spoken many times before publication. To illustrate: Originally, "Let not your heart be troubled" was no doubt the intimate pastoral word of the Ephesian veteran Christian to particular people or a particular group who were in great distress of mind.

Secondly, further help in recovering the original impression may be obtained by repeating the verses with the substitution of the third person for the first. This may be said, in a sense, to effect a translation of the "I" style into our usual modern way of stating a creed or confession.

1. Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, and believe in Jesus also. 2. In the Father's house are many mansions. Jesus went to prepare a place for you. 3. He promised to return and to take you to himself. 6. Jesus is the way, and the truth, and the life. 9. He who has known Jesus has known the Father. 10. He lived in the Father, and the Father was in him. The words that he spoke, he spoke not of himself, but the Father abiding in him was doing his own work. 12. He who believes in Jesus will do the works that Jesus did; and still greater works he will achieve. 16. And Jesus has given us a Helper, 17. even the Spirit. 18. Jesus does not leave us alone: he comes to us. 20. In the day that he comes we know that he is in the Father, and we in him, and he in us. 23. If any one loves Jesus, he will keep Jesus' commandments: and the Father God will love him. 27. Jesus speaks to us and says: Peace be with you. His own peace he gives to us, not as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled.

In the third place, the prayer-note which is one of the overtones in a creedal confession can be captured by turning the same passage into the second person. 1. Our hearts shall not be troubled. 2. In the Father's house are many mansions. Thou, Jesus, hast gone to prepare a place for us. 3. Thou hast promised to come again to take us to thyself. 6. Thou art the way and the truth and the life. 9. He that hath known thee hath known the Father. 10. Thou wast in the Father, and the Father in thee. The words that thou didst say thou didst not speak of thyself, but the Father abiding in thee did perform through thee his works. 12. He who believeth in thee will do thy works; and greater works will he achieve. 16. And thou hast given us a Helper, 17. even the Spirit. 18. Thou hast not left us desolate; thou hast come to us. 20. In the hour thou hast come we have known that thou wast in the Father and we in thee and thou in us. 23. If a man loves thee he will keep thy commandments; and thy Father will love him. 27. Peace thou givest to us; thy peace thou givest. Our hearts shall not be troubled.

In the fourth place, let the whole chapter be read in the first person as John has written it, holding before the mind its oral first use, its content as a creed, and its beauty as a prayer. Remember Paul's words, "Christ liveth in me," and Jesus' words in Luke xii, 12, "The Holy Spirit will teach you what you ought to say." Put yourself in John's place with living men before you looking up to you for an answer and thus as an "ambassador" speaking for Jesus feel that you have Jesus in person behind you in giving this answer.

As stated above, the underlying subject dealt with is the Second Coming. Verse 3 makes the first specific allusion to the return of Jesus. In verse 18 Jesus promises, "I will not leave you friendless and alone: I will come to you." Verse 20 speaks of "that Day." Again in verse 28 Jesus says, "I go away, and I come to you." The position taken and unfolded at length in the chapter is

that the promise of the Second Coming is no longer promise, but fulfillment for every believer who has opened his heart that Jesus might dwell there, along with the gift of Eternal life that he comes bearing with him.

"In my Father's house are many mansions" (2). The words call up Paul's hope expressed in II Cor. v, 1, "If the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." As stated before, Paul still clung, however, to the Jewish idea of a single literal Coming or Parousia, with a great assize of the living and dead, but he also betrayed the fact that he was influenced at times as here by the Greek conception that at death the souls of virtuous men are received back into the bosom of God. We find the Greek point of view preponderates in the Fourth Gospel. "Mansions" in the "Father's house" convey a popular, domestic, soul-warming picture of the truth that at death the soul goes home. After years of wandering and tenting in the flesh, as it were, it goes home to the Father's house, where preparation has been made for a great welcome into a permanent abiding place. Jesus preceded them to prepare a place for each of his friends.

Acceptance of this point of view would tend to rob speculation concerning a single Second Coming, with a great assize of the living and dead, of its chief attractions. The Jewish hope differed. The Jews clung to their hope for a day of general resurrection because they believed their dead were in Sheol. Their road up to the presence of God must include a return to earth in a literal resurrection. In exchange for that hope, good and comforting as it is, John is confident that Jesus has shown him a better hope still. That there may be no misunderstanding of his meaning he uses the exact words of the older hope in verse 3, "I go . . . and I come again." Then he proceeds to break his news of the new and unexpected way to them that Jesus will "come again." This is the only occurrence in this Gospel, it may be worth noting, of the ex-

pression that Jesus will come "again"; elsewhere it is simply "go" and "come." This holds true even in verse 28, where for the sake of smoothness we have translated "return."

The reference to "going" and "coming" introduces the figure of the "way." The way Jesus will go and come (3-4) leads to the thought of the way which Christians must go (6). The change from letter to symbol is led up to, as usual in this Gospel, by a puzzled question, "We do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?" (5). Thus do we make the acquaintance of the designation of Christianity as "the Way," a name very widely used in the first century. One of the most interesting early Christian documents, the Didache or "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," is a description of the two "Ways," the way of life and the way of death. The Book of Acts uses the same expression, "any that were of the Way" (ix, 2). Once again the Fourth Gospel evidences its intensely practical character by putting its foot down on all human speculation as idle, concerning whither Jesus himself is going and the way. In the case of those who coveted a knowledge of how to work the works that Jesus did, it rather tartly told them that the miracle for them to perform was the miracle of believing in Jesus. Similarly here, in a like tart fashion, it tells its readers to curb their curiosity in regard to whither Jesus was going himself and the way and center their whole attention on learning the heavenly way, truth and life for themselves from him for Jesus was that way, truth and life personified.

Verse 12, like the rest of the chapter, yields its largest meaning when read in the light of Ephesian Christianity as its context. "Greater works than these (of Galilee) shall he achieve" refers as elsewhere in the Gospel to the larger scale on which Christian activity did carry on in the Empire in the latter part of the first century, as that seed-sowing in Nazareth and Jerusalem began to return increasing

yields. Jesus gave sight in Galilee to blind men here and there. Through his ambassadors in Ephesus he was giving sight to the blind in great numbers. Jesus fed a multitude in Galilee on one or two occasions; but his followers as his almoners were feeding many multitudes with the bread of life in every land of the civilized world.

The promise of Jesus to "come again" (3) and the discussion of the "way" (6) leading to the assurance of the "greater works" (12) daily proven true in Ephesus, culminate in the coming of the Spirit (16, 17). The Spirit supplies the missing element that makes the "greater works" possible. This bringing of the Helper is identified in verse 18, "I will not leave you alone; I will come to you" as that which brings him back again. The statement that the unconverted world "does not recognize or know the Spirit" confirms this interpretation of the Coming which is in line, also, with Jesus' statement in Luke xvii, 20, 21, "The Kingdom of God comes not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, There! for lo, the Kingdom of God is within you."

The identification of the bringing of the Spirit as the great object and the sufficient explanation of his "coming again" holds true in the following verses, 20-24. "In that Day" was the accepted expression to designate the Day of the Messianic Coming both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. "Who may abide the day of his coming?" (Mal. iii, 2). "Many will say in that day" (Mat. vii, 22). "The day of the Lord is coming" (I Thess. v, 2). Here in John's Gospel the "Day of the Messianic Coming" is interpreted as referring to the great day of the coming of the spiritual presence of Jesus into the heart of each new follower. Confidence that this is the true reading is intensified by the statement in verse 21 that Jesus "will reveal" or "manifest" himself in special degree to the inner circle of those who keep his commandments and who love him and are loved by him. Again the device of a misunderstanding and "the question of information"

so common in this Gospel meets us in verse 22. "You will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?" The apocalyptic view was that the Messianic coming was to be a world event. Then advantage is taken of the opportunity to make a still more explicit statement in verse 23 that the Father "will come" with Jesus and they will make their "abode" together with the true disciple.

Again in verses 25 ff. we have this same point of view in regard to the Second Coming carried a step further. The "Helper" previously referred to is definitely stated to be the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will "bring to remembrance" (26) that Jesus said "I go away, and I return" (28) and his very presence will be the absolutely satisfactory answer and put a stop once for all to all speculation over what he was referring to when he said "I go away and I return."

On the side of method, this was a feat of religious statesmanship on John's part. He made no direct attack upon those who took the apocalyptic prophecies literally. Yet he did not evade but answered clearly and definitely all who were asking the question, "Where is the promise of his coming?" (II Pet. iii, 4). Jesus has already returned and is present spiritually in our midst, answered John, and put his answer to positive use in the enrichment of the religious consciousness of his hearers. He turned the appeal of apocalyptic poetry from an idle dream into a powerful agent in the promotion of the Christian cause. He startled his people then and he startles us today by his soul-stirring proclamation that the wonders of the great "Day" are already taking place all over the world.

THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES

JOHN XV

xv, 1. I am the true vine, and my Father is the caretaker. 2. Any branch that does not bear fruit he removes; and every branch that bears fruit he cleanses and prunes so that it may bear more fruit. 4. As a branch

cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it remains in union with the vine; so you cannot unless you remain in union with me. 5. I am the vine, you are the branches. Any one who abides in union with me, as I abide in union with him, bears good fruit. 6. If any one does not abide in me, he is thrown away like a branch, and withers up; and men gather such branches and throw them in the fire and burn them. 8. It is through your bearing of good fruit that my Father is honored.

13. No man has greater love than this, that he will lay down his life for his friends. 15. I no longer call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing: but I have now called you "friends"; for I have made known to you everything that I have learned from my Father. 16. I chose you, and appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will abide.

18. If the world hates you, you know that it has hated me first. 20. A servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. 21. They will do all this to you because they do not know the one who sent me. 22. If I had not come and spoken to them they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. 23. He who hates me hates my Father also. 25. As written in their Law, They hated me without cause.

As has been previously stated, the three fundamental words of this Gospel are Light, Life, and Belief in him. Jesus is the Light of the world who lights the way into Eternal life for all who make the great surrender and travel the path thus pointed out. The great surrender constitutes the one and only valid proof of Belief in him or Loyalty to him. Chapter ix presented and explained Jesus as the Light; chapter xi, Jesus as the Life; chapter xv now presents and explains the Belief in Jesus or Loyalty by which the Disciple becomes a partaker of that Light and Life.

Loyalty, or "Belief," or "Faith," is more than the personal devotion of a subordinate to his Chief in this Gospel. In the synoptic gospels, as explained before, "to believe on" means to trust him, but in Paul it means that and in addition to enter into partnership with, to come into close personal mystical communion with. This vital contact is fundamental, also, for John. Hot water is hot water, but when the heat in hot water reaches the intensity of steam, the hot water acts so differently that it is really something else. So, for John consent that Jesus is right in his teaching is consent until it reaches a transition point of communion when consent and obedience act so differently that they are really something else altogether. Again, communion with him is communion, but when the consent that gives him right of way in a disciple's being reaches a still higher transition point and the two lives remain two lives but are indistinguishably one in quality, consent and communion act so differently that they are really names for something else and no longer do justice to the pitch of intimacy between the two lives that started as disciple and master, but have long since passed on out of that relationship. In the Fourth Gospel, John is putting on an advanced course in the Christian life. The earlier stages of consent and communion are assumed in the main and treated apparently as milk for babes. The meat for men that the Fourth Gospel provides is this recipe for the attainment of the goal where the two lives that started as disciple and Master remain two but are indistinguishably one in quality and have, therefore, outgrown the relation of Master and disciple.

In reading chapter xv observe again the four rules given in the preceding chapter. First fancy yourself a member of one of the Ephesian audiences who heard it delivered before it was prepared for publication. Second, read it aloud in the third person. Third, repeat it again and use "thou" and "thee." Fourth, in the spirit of Jesus' words in the last chapter, "I come unto you," think

of Jesus as on a visit to Ephesus and, at John's invitation, specially addressing this talk to the Christians of Ephesus.

Jesus is the vine; we are the branches. He who keeps in vital touch with Jesus bears good fruit (5). If a disciple lets his personal contact with Jesus be severed, he becomes like a detached and withered branch, the kind that are gathered and thrown in the fire and burned (6). It is only as good fruit is borne that the Father (as caretaker) is honored.

The direct use of the figure of the vine ends with the tenth verse, but the same vein of thought runs on through the chapter, as is indicated by the double mention of "fruit" in verse 16. It is a quite different form of illustration from the parable form used in the synoptic gospels. Here every item has its symbolism. This is the best example of allegory in the New Testament. The attempt might be made to relate this allegory to sayings of Jesus in regard to wine and fruit in the other gospels. But it will be far more illuminating to examine it in the light of two of Paul's favorite ways of speaking.

Paul made use of such expressions as "Christ in me" and "I in him" (Gal. ii, 20; Rom. viii, 1; Col. i, 27). Paul had many ways of speaking of this kind which were difficult for some of his followers to grasp. One of John's great services to Christianity was his ability to state these more deeply mystical sentiments in simple concrete language. John was even more truly a popular preacher than was Paul. Any one can see the general point and remember the picture of the vine, the branches and the fruit. Church windows are a witness to the wide popularity of this symbol. Yet, like other pictures in John's Gospel, dig down and it will be found to contain an unmeasured depth of religious significance and appeal. Wherever the expressions "in me," "in him," "in the Father," "in us," "in you" are found in Paul and John, referring them to this figure of the vine and the branches will be found to be the best way to understand them. Apply this, for ex-

ample, to xiv, 20, "You will know that I am in the Father as you in me."

The "fruits" of the Spirit is another favorite expression of Paul. Over and over again, as John repeats the word "fruit," his hearers must have thought of some such list as that of Gal. v, 22, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, self-control." To these, as John had often reminded his hearers must be added other fruits, such as feeding hungry souls, dispensing the water of life, giving light to the spiritually blind, and life to the dead and despairing.

In verses 11-16 John still adheres to his subject, the loyalty of believers to Jesus in personal union with him. He drops the mask of the figurative and speaks openly of the bond existing between intimate "friends." Here again is a word of undying significance, eternally fresh and valid. There are many good recent books on "Friendship" and all the wealth of this literature can be drawn on by the Christian leader in depicting the relation of Christians to Jesus. "No longer do I call you servants; for the servant does not know what his master is doing: but I have called you friends" (15). Verse 15 harks back for its full, imposing meaning to the supreme act of devotion between "friends" in verse 13. The emphasis upon knowledge, *i.e.*, sharing each other's confidences, as the feature distinguishing friend and servant is in line with the attitude of John toward knowledge throughout his Gospel. It is through such sharing of his confidence that we come to "know" Jesus in a personal way. "No longer" reminds us that as recently as Paul, a disciple might refer to himself as a bond servant of Christ. But John "no longer" used this term, although Paul had done so in Ephesus and elsewhere. John emphasized the dignity and glory and emancipating power that were the accompaniments of the knowledge obtained by sharing in the confidences of Jesus. (See comments on viii, 31-36.)

While he is on the subject of friendship John improves

the opportunity to introduce an explanation of the death of Jesus from this new angle. John's positive and powerful interpretations of this event have been noted in the comments on viii, 20-25; x, 11; and xii, 20-32. Here is still another. The explanation why Jesus died is the simple reason of friendship. "No man has greater love than this, that a man will lay down his life for his friends" (13). Like his other explanations, this one is not in the nature of a theological exposition of Jesus' death.

The explanation of Jesus' death as the laying down of life in behalf of his friends opens the way for a discussion of persecution (xv, 18-xvi, 4). These talks were given either at times when persecution was imminent or at times when persecution was at work among them. What is the right attitude in which to meet and suffer persecution? If any are inclined to plead that persecution of them is unmerited by them let them remember that the world hated him before it hated them. Surely they do not claim that they merit better treatment than he at the hands of the world's hate. Again, if the "Master" divested himself of that name, and took up the name of Friend, their greatest and best, and as one friend for another died for them, what kind of friends would they show themselves to be when persecution calls upon them to lay down their lives for him, if they murmur first and complain and then refuse?

Persecution is something distant and historical and unreal to us, but to John's hearers in Ephesus the question how to meet it was, perhaps, chief among their pressing daily problems. And hundreds of the Christian rank and file threw their persecutors into a new, strange and unbearable terror by the look of unearthly joy on their faces as they marched forth to meet the torment, torture and death prepared for them by the world's hate. Elsewhere we are told that we ought not to find it hard to love God when he had loved us so adorably first. So these Christian martyrs told the world that hated them that the reason they

did not find it hard to die as one friend for another for Jesus was that he had died as one friend for another for them first.

THE DEPARTURE AND THE RETURN OF JESUS

JOHN XVI

xvi, 2. They will put you out of their synagogues: in fact the hour is coming when any one who kills you will consider that he is doing religious service for God. 4. I have spoken to you of these things in order that when the time for them comes you may remember that I told you about them myself.

7. It is better for you that I should go away; for if I do not go the Helper will not come to you; but if I go I will send him to you. 12. I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13. But when the Spirit of Truth comes he will guide you into all truth. 14. He will do honor to me: for he will take what is mine and unfold it to you.

16. A little while and you will see me no more; and then a little while and you will see me. 19. Are you asking one another about my saying, A little while? 20. I tell you you will weep and mourn but the world will rejoice: you will be in grievous sorrow, but your sorrow shall turn to happiness. 21. A woman is sorrowful when she is bearing a child; but when the child is born she forgets her anguish. 22. You are sorrowful now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will be happy, and no one will take away your happiness.

25. I have spoken these things to you in figurative language: the hour is coming when I shall not speak any longer in figures and symbols, but shall tell you plainly about the Father. 27. For the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me. 32. The hour is coming when you will all be scattered to your homes—that time has come—and I shall be left alone: yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. 33. In the

world you will find trouble. But have courage! I have conquered the world.

Verses 1 to 4 conclude the talk on persecution (xv, 18-xvi, 4) and serve to introduce the main subject of chapter xvi, the departure and the return of Jesus. Verses 4 to 14 deal with the subject of Jesus' departure. Why did Jesus go away at all and thus create the flood of questioning and discussion as to the time and method of his return? No Christian preacher in Ephesus could hold a congregation without a good and sufficient answer to that query. John's bold, unequivocal answer rises to the sublime religious height of preaching that it was "better" that he should go away (7), for had he not done so Christians ever after would have remained in the state of the first disciples during his first stay with them, mere followers without vision or initiative. But on his return, he comes, bringing the Helper, the Holy Spirit, and this second stay of his "in the power of the Spirit" confers a far higher status upon his disciples since than that possessed in the first instance by those who were his companions in the flesh.

John dares to say that we are not to be classed with those with whom he made his first stay; not as literal servants of a man of Nazareth as they seemed to be. We are no longer servants but friends. It was expedient for us that he go away; for the object of his going was to bring back the Holy Spirit to say "many things" (12) to us which they could not hear. The Christian religion is not a static system of teaching delivered once for all and thereafter to be taken on historical hearsay. It is a living, growing, developing thing. For on his second stay with us in the power of the Spirit, the "Spirit of Truth," he is guiding us gradually "into all truth" (13). The more glorious our progress in the things of the Spirit, the more "honor" do we do Jesus (14), for it is the office of the Spirit of Truth to glorify him.

Although used in quite a different connection, the words

of E. F. Scott form a very telling comment on verse 13. "The disciples believed that along with his message Jesus had imparted the revealing and life-giving Spirit. His Gospel was not bound to a fixed tradition, but was capable of endless growth and self-renewal. It could take into itself new elements, and keep pace with the world's movement, and appeal with a fresh meaning to every age."[1]

John was altogether persuaded that during the intervening years of Jesus' second stay in the power of the Spirit with them, Christian disciples then living had been guided into truth not dreamed of or only dimly visioned by the first disciples. The all-consuming motive behind these Christian talks of his own was a hope of the highest intensity that they might "do honor to" Jesus (14) by convincing many that the Spirit of Truth was at work in them, making them a living proof that in the intervening half-century men had learned to know Jesus as a world savior.

But Jesus' going away was a bitter experience for his immediate comrades. On the eve of his departure, his "coming again" with the gift of the Spirit which he would come bringing with him was then only promise and prospect while their disillusion and desolation were present and dire. The phrase "a little while" is used to comfort them with great effect and deep emotional appeal. "A little while" occurs twice in verse 16, twice in 17, again in 18, twice in 19; and the thought recurs throughout the chapter. For John, the words possess a double content of meaning and are put to a double purpose, one in their Jerusalem context and the other in an Ephesian one, a half-century later.

In the first place, "a little while" implies that Jesus' "come again" (xiv, 3), which was only promise and prospect in Jerusalem, had turned since into realization and joy in Ephesus. John alternates in speaking of the sending of the Helper, meaning the Holy Spirit (xiv, 26; xvi, 7)

[1] *The Spirit in the New Testament*, p. v.

and of the coming of Jesus himself (xiv, 28; xvi, 16) in such wise as to make it plain that to him the one is the object of the other. We must not forget that he is here answering the question, "How can a man who was put to death be the savior of the world?" The bearing upon his saviorhood of his death, says John, is that his going was of the nature of an errand to bring back the Spirit with him on his quick return. As it is usually expressed by scholars, John identifies the resurrection and the coming of the Spirit, and the Return of Christ. "The emphasis upon the Little While means that Jesus' resurrection is virtually his final return to his disciples as the helper or spirit of truth to abide as a spiritual presence in their hearts."[2] Paul is authority for the statement that the cross was a stumbling-block to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks. How to satisfy sincere Christian inquirers on this point was a main problem of this Christian preacher in Ephesus. His answer in the Fourth Gospel is that Jesus' death was a going away on a particular errand and after his quick return, his second stay with his disciples in the power of the Spirit is much more fruitful for them than his first stay with those men of Galilee in the days of his flesh.

In the second place, all this is applicable without any forcing, to the issue raised by the constant fear of persecution in Ephesus. "You will be sorrowful but your sorrow will turn to happiness" (20). As Jesus upon the cross cried, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mar. xv., 34), so it may seem to Christians of Ephesus in their dread of persecution beforehand that Jesus has gone away again and that God has forsaken them. But in the very hour and agony of actual persecution, loyal Christians will find that Jesus and the Father "will come" again and make their abode with them (xiv, 23). "A woman when she is bearing a child has sorrow, but when the child is born she remembers no more the anguish" (21). The

[2] Goodspeed, p. 30.

unearthly joy even displayed by early Christians not only in persecution but also in martyrdom "glorified the Father in the Son" in no uncertain way. "You now have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your hearts shall rejoice, and no one will rob you of your joy" (22).

Here again the mystery religions make a fundamental contribution. The story of the restoration of Attis, the coming back of Persephone, the return of Osiris, all enshrine the same religious teaching. (See comments on John 11.) The people of Asia Minor and of the Empire in general were as familiar with their religious meanings as they were with these tales themselves. Thus, these religions had "prepared the way" (Mar. i, 3) for the Christian gospel; for Christian leaders found a language and vocabulary ready to hand when they came to deal with inquirers who had had this religious training. One sentence, for example, in the ritual of Attis reads: "Be of good cheer, initiates, the god has been saved: Thus for you also shall there be salvation from your troubles."[3] Inquirers with this training would make good soil in which to sow the seed of the Gospel of Jesus' second stay with his followers in the power of the Spirit. The philosophy in which they had been trained was a philosophy that it is always darkest before the dawn. They would be reminded of the sorrow and anguish of the earth in her winter of labor, and of the succeeding springtime with its joy followed by its much fruit. They would be attracted to a Gospel that held human souls fast in loyalty to Jesus through any persecution or any personal sorrow or moral conflict into the springtime of the light of knowledge and into the sunshine of fruitfulness as they saw the Christian Gospel doing in Ephesus.

The same line of thought supplies us with a fresh reading of the meaning of the later verses, 25 to 27. "The hour is coming when I shall no longer speak to you in figures and symbols, but shall tell you plainly of the

[3] Kennedy, p. 91.

Father." These inquirers will be quick to see its meaning for them. In exchange for these symbols and allegories of the mystery religions, which, after all, are mere human speculation, this is an offer on the part of the Christian Gospel, of hours of mystic insight in communion with Jesus when the soul sees God in his goodness and feels his encircling arm. Such moments convey to the Christian with a knowledge that is intuitive and unquestioning that "the Father himself loves" him (27). To the soul in the grip of the power of this inner experience, it matters not if in the world he has "trouble" (33). Really tribulation cannot harm and can bless in bringing one into closer company with him who in his tribulation could say "I have conquered the world" (33).

THE PARTING PRAYER

JOHN XVII

xvii, 3. This is life eternal, to know thee as the only true God, and to know Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. 4. I have done honor to thee on the earth, and have completed the work which thou hast given me to do. 6. I have revealed thy true nature to the men whom thou gavest me. 7. They now recognize that all which thou hast given me comes from thee. 8. For I have given them the truths which thou gavest me; and they now believe that thou didst send me. 11. And now I am to be in the world no longer, but they are to remain in the world, while I come to thee. Holy Father, keep them by thy power. 12. While I was with them, I kept them, and I guarded them. 13. But now I am to come to thee. 15. I am not praying thee to take them away from the world but to keep them from evil. 17. Consecrate them to the truth: thy word is truth.

18. As thou didst send me into the world so have I sent them into the world. 20. It is not for them only that I am making this prayer, but also for those who believe in me through their word; 21. I pray that they

all may be one. 22. I have given them the glory which thou hast given me; 23. so that the world may recognize that thou lovest them just as thou lovedst me. 25. Righteous Father, 26. I have made known thy true nature to them and will continue to do so; so that the love which thou hast had for me may be in their hearts, and I may be there also.

What was Jesus' work? Did he come to sponsor a new teaching, or to be offered as a sacrifice for sin, or by miracle and resurrection to throw a blaze of light on the character of God and the immortality of the soul? Again, what is the work of the Christian Church? Is it to preserve the revelation of Jesus? Is it to keep itself unspotted from the world? This chapter answers all these questions in principle by a single thought which runs all the way through it: namely, the continuity of the life and love of God which first found complete expression or incarnation in Jesus and from him as Vine flowed as the life-sap into, and produced in, his disciples, the Branches, a life and love like unto itself (verses 4, 8, 11, 18, 22, 26).

The inference all through the chapter is that however we conceive of Jesus' life-work, similarily must we conceive of our own. If he came to suffer for sin, suffering for sin is our mission in life, too. If his work was to advance the knowledge of God among men, making new progress in revealing him is, also, our business in life. John does not leave us in doubt as to his idea of Jesus' work: The love and the life which God had loved into life in him, was to be loved into the life of his disciples; he in them, they in him and God in them all. His share in this work which was given to him to do during his first stay with his disciples he "completed" (4) and "finished" (xix, 28) with his last breath upon the cross. That work was resumed and is being continued on a "greater" (xiv, 12) scale by his disciples during his second stay with them in the power of the spirit. This union or oneness of love

and life in God and Jesus and his disciples is the Himalaya peak of John's Gospel.

A distinguishing feature of this chapter compared with the preceding ones is its form. It is an intercessory prayer. But it should be remembered that John wrote it under the guidance of the Spirit and offered it before his assembled congregation on many occasions before he considered its publication. Perhaps the first suggestion, indeed, for giving these chapters to the world was not his own, but came from his disciples.

The fact that this chapter is already a prayer in form should make it particularly easy to follow the procedure recommended in the comments on chapters xiv and xv. Rules three and four coalesce since this is a prayer addressed to God and speaks of Jesus at times in the third person. The exquisite beauty and hallowed associations of the words as they stand make any suggestion of a change even for a moment hazardous. Nevertheless, it will certainly give the prayer fresh significance if the reader will imagine himself seated in the congregation and participating with John as he enters into the spirit of Jesus and gives utterance to this prayer. The third person is used as far as the close of verse 3 exactly as any Christian of modern times would speak in prayer of "Jesus Christ whom thou didst send." Then in verse 4 the "I" style begins. He, even Jesus Christ, did honor thee on the earth by completing the works which thou gavest him to do. 6. He manifested thy true nature to the men whom thou gavest him. 8. The truths which thou gavest him he gave to them. 11. Now he is no longer in the world and we are in the world. Holy Father, keep us by thy power that we may be one with Jesus, just as Jesus and his disciples were one. 12. While he was with them he kept them; and he guarded them. 13. But now he has gone to thee. 15. We do not pray thee to take us out of the world, but to keep us from evil. 17. Consecrate us to the truth: thy word is truth. 18. As thou didst send him

into the world just so has he sent us into the world. 19. He consecrated himself for our sakes in order that we also might be consecrated. 20. It is not for ourselves alone that we pray but also for those who believe on Jesus through our word. 21. May we all be one. 22. And the glory which thou gavest to Jesus he has given to us. 25. Righteous Father, the world did not know thee, but he knew thee, and his disciples knew that thou didst send him. 26. And he made known to them thy true nature, and he continues to make it known, so that the love with which thou didst love him is in our hearts. And may he, too, be in our hearts.

Many of the most familiar ideas of the Gospel recur here. "Life eternal" is the essence of salvation (3). Jesus' "work" in the flesh is "completed," as we have noted, as he nears his death upon the cross (4). The word "work" carries its usual suggestion that it was the good works which he did which bear testimony to the fact that Jesus was Son of the Father. A hint, also, appears of the character of the "greater works" (v, 20; i, 50; xiv, 12) which we as his disciples are to accomplish. In verse 5 the thought recurs of Jesus' death as a glorifying of his work and of him. This positive interpretation of his death as of the nature of a triumph is here carried to such a height as to suggest fulfillment of the early Christian apocalyptic hope that Jesus would come with "glory" (22. *Cf.*, Mar. xiii, 26).

The fundamental idea of the Gospel that knowledge of God and life eternal are inseparables appears throughout the chapter. This is life eternal, to know thee as the only true God and to know Jesus as one whom thou didst send (3; *Cf.*, 8, 23). Knowledge in this Gospel, as stated before, is no merely mental transaction. We have to go back to the figure of the vine to get its full force. It is the kind of knowledge that the life-sap in the branches gives the branches of the life of the vine. This thought furnishes the key to the meaning of the word "truth"

(8, 17, 19; *Cf.*, Spirit of Truth, xiv, 17). "Truth," also, is not an intellectual conquest. It is the fruit of the Vine, unknown, therefore, to any but the Branches that carry the life-sap which produces it.

"The world" (9, 11, 21, 23) is used with varying shades of meaning. "I pray not for the world" (9) must not be set off in isolation from its context. Jesus has been heralded in this Gospel as "the Savior of the world" (iv, 42). It does not solve the apparent contradiction and difference of tone to say that one of these attitudes traces back to one "source" and the other to another; for here we have the two ideas interrelated within the same chapter. The astonishing claim is sometimes made that John considers it God's plan to leave "the world" in general in darkness and selected ones only are to share in his light. Exactly the reverse is true. The world's hope centered in that little circle. Verse 9 means that Jesus does care for the world and that the world in the end is to be the principal beneficiary of this particular petition. Again verse 23, "That the world may know that thou didst send me," should not be taken as a plea for self-vindication on the part of Jesus; it is the expression of a genuine desire and even expectation that "the world may believe" (21).

It is usually thought that John sets "Church" in a somewhat rigid way over against the world. (See our chapter, Characteristics of the Gospel.) Too much should not be made of this view. The word "Church" never occurs in the Gospel. It was a time of severe testing, of persecution, of false preachers who were mercenary, a time when the world drew a sharp distinction between "its own" way of life and the Christian way of life. John agrees that a rigid line divides ordinary existence in the world from the life eternal in the fellowship of Jesus Christ. The bridge is always down, however, for any one who wishes to make the crossing.

CHAPTER XVI

LAST HOURS

JOHN XVIII TO XX

xviii, 1. Jesus went out with his disciples and crossed the Valley of the Cedars, where there was a garden, into which he went. 2. Now Judas knew the place: for Jesus had often met with his disciples there. 3. So Judas after securing the garrison of Roman soldiers, with some deputies from the chief priests and the Pharisees, comes there with lanterns, torches and weapons. 4. Jesus, with full knowledge of what was coming, says to them, Whom are you seeking? 5. They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus says to them, I am he; 8. so if you are looking for me, let these men go. 9. This was in fulfillment of the word he had spoken, Of those whom thou hast given me I have lost none. 10. Simon Peter, who had a sword with him, drew it and struck at the high priest's slave and cut off his right ear. The name of the slave was Malchus. 11. Then Jesus said to Peter, Put up your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup which the Father has given me?

The first twelve or thirteen chapters of John's Gospel contain material, as has been said, which may have been previously used as the basis of public oral talks or appeals. The material in chapters xiv to xvii would seem to be the outgrowth of a ministry of prayer and meditation. Chapters xviii to xx differ somewhat from both these preceding sections for they consist for the most part of simple historical narrative. In form, they are personal reminiscences

of Jesus' last hours, devoid of sermonizing or symbol. All this may well correspond with the three aspects of the author's ministry in Ephesus. At times an occasion would call for the delivery of such a talk as is suggested in chapter vi. At other times he would lead his people in prayer and meditation. At rare intervals, the spirit would move him to give them his memories of Jerusalem days.

At such times he did not hesitate to correct the closing events in Jesus' life as given in Mark and to supplement with fresh detail. Even those who will not admit that this Gospel could have been written by an eye-witness still feel, as Bacon does, that the author had visited Jerusalem or even as Moffatt does that the author must have visited Jerusalem before its destruction in 70 A.D. They, also, concede that its author must have had access to a reliable source of information in regard to the events of these last days. Always the factor of editing of the Gospel enters in and complicates the problem. Passages, accordingly, which seem to combine the author's narrative with that of a source or of an editor will be noted. But no one denies that these chapters include material of high historical value.

One of the most striking matters of record in which John differs from the Markan synoptic story is the day of the arrest. Was Jesus arrested on the day before the Passover meal, or after the Passover supper? In other words, did the betrayal and the trial take place on the night before the Passover lamb was slain, and did the crucifixion therefore take place before the Passover day began? The Jewish day always began at sunset, and the Passover was eaten soon after sunset. The solution of the problem reduces itself to determining the right answer to the simple question: Did Jesus eat the Passover with his disciples? The one alternative, that Jesus did not, for he was crucified before the Passover day, is represented by John; the other by Mark, Matthew and Luke. Mark xiv, 12, 16, 18, state that "his disciples . . . made ready

the Passover. And as they were eating, Jesus said . . . one of you shall betray me." John's statement is just as definitely to the contrary. He says, xiii, 1, 2, 21, "Before the festival of the Passover during supper . . . Jesus said, One of you shall betray me." After the trial before Caiaphas the Jews led Jesus to the Praetorium, "and they themselves did not enter, so that they might not be defiled, but might eat the Passover" (xviii, 28). The day of the Crucifixion "was the Preparation of the Passover" (xix, 14; *Cf.*, xix, 31).

Some important considerations decidedly favor the correctness of John's chronology. It is difficult to believe that the trials of Jesus, the assembling of the Sanhedrin, and the other events, could have taken place on the most holy night of the Jewish year. Moreover, certain details in Mark's own narrative support the accuracy of John's dating. For example, in planning two days before the Passover to take Jesus, the chief priests said, "Not during the feast, lest there should be a tumult of the people" (Mar. xiv, 2). Again Mark (xv, 42), after the crucifixion, states that "it was the Preparation," and it was usual to employ the word "Preparation" to denote the day before the Passover. Such is the usage in John xix, 31. It is easy to understand how, after the Eucharist had attained its great importance in early Christianity, the next generation regarding it so from childhood might fall into the way of identifying the Last Supper with the Passover. This would be especially likely among those who understood that the original celebration of the Lord's Supper occurred on Jesus' last night in the flesh. This is the position taken by the synoptic gospels as distinguished from John. The key to the whole situation is the fact that Jewish Christianity identified the Last Supper with the Jewish Passover, while non-Jewish Christianity as represented by John dissociated the two.

Throughout chapters xviii to xx a general knowledge of Christian tradition on the part of his hearers is assumed

in this Gospel. In other words, John makes no claim to completeness as history for his narrative. It is rather a collection of personal memorabilia concerning Jesus. Westcott gives a list of incidents narrated in Mark and Matthew which are omitted by John: 1. The agony. 2. The traitor's kiss. 3. The desertion by the disciples. 4. The whole account of the examination before the Sanhedrin. 5. The mockery as prophet. 6. The council at daybreak (Mar. xv, 1). 7. The mockery after condemnation. 8. The impressment of Simon. 9. The reproaches of spectators and of the robbers. 10. The darkness. 11. The cry, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" 12. The rending of the veil. 13. The confession of the centurion. Many other incidents recorded only by single synoptic gospels which are omitted by John are noted by Westcott. He does not include, however, in any of his lists the omission by John of the healing of the ear of the high priest's servant (Luke xxii, 51; *Cf.*, John xviii, 10). The character of these omissions has a bearing on the character of John's narrative. Many of the omissions are of events of such a character as would occupy a reporter or a historian, but do not serve John's purpose particularly, which is to magnify the mission on which Jesus came to men and to prepare the way for a portrayal of Jesus' quick return for a second and much longer stay with his disciples in the power of the Spirit.

The first eleven verses of chapter xviii illustrate four characteristics of the chapters as a whole. In the first place, John renders his narrative more circumstantial by giving additional details of time and place. In verse 1 he states that Jesus went out and crossed the Kedron or Valley of the "Cedars." John alone of the gospel writers thus informs us of the name of this ravine between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives. The name occurs often in the Old Testament, which brings its mention into line with his fondness for alluding to old Bible associations. Again in verse 10 John names the "certain one" (Mar.

xiv, 47) who drew his sword and struck off the ear of the slave of the high priest. It was Simon Peter. Still again John alone gives the slave's name, Malchus.

In the second place, John represents Jesus' knowledge of his spiritual oneness with the Father as enabling Jesus to face death with the same superior singleness and certainty as his knowledge that he had been sent of God enabled him to face his whole life in the flesh (4). This superior singleness and certainty in regard to his own course on the part of Jesus is characteristic of the Gospel. Not only is Jesus frequently represented as "knowing what was coming" (4), but the Fourth Gospel, also, takes a marked interest in special predictions of Jesus and their subsequent fulfillment either during the ministry or later in the spiritual life of the larger Christian brotherhood. Here it states that the disciples were not molested, "in fulfillment of the word which Jesus had spoken, Of those whom thou hast given me, I have lost none" (9).

A third characteristic of John's narrative closely related to the preceding is the attention called by it to the dignity and majesty exhibited by Jesus in his last hours as compared with the suffering portrayed as uppermost in Mark. Note the things omitted by him as given in Westcott's list above. In xviii, 1, Jesus has arrived in the garden, but John gives no description of his anguish. There is no reference to his saying, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful" (Mar. xiv, 34); nor to his prayer, "Remove this cup from me" (Mar. xiv, 36); nor to the agony in which his sweat becomes "as it were great drops of blood" (Luk. xxii, 44).

Finally, a fourth characteristic of John's narrative of the arrest, trial and crucifixion is the omission of every miraculous element. Stories of miracle crowded upon him, asking to be included. But for some reason he turned every one aside. Possibly the explanation is that the tendency illustrated in so many of the apocryphal gospels to go to the wildest lengths of the absurd and the puerile

in this respect was already actively in process. Their weird stories of supernatural events would strongly repel a man of John's highly spiritual attitude and mind. More probably, it was because the many miracle stories popularized by other religious and superstitious beliefs in Ephesus made John hesitate. Whatever the cause, his reticence in this matter is striking. In verse 10 he narrates that the servant's ear was cut off. He adds the detail, even, found elsewhere only in Luke, that it was the right ear. Yet he makes no reference to the miracle recorded in Luke (xxii, 51) that Jesus touched the ear and healed it. Similarly the midday darkness recorded by all three Synoptists is not mentioned at all. Still again the rending of the veil, recorded by Mark and Matthew, is omitted. The earthquake, the opening of the graves, the resurrection of the saints, are none of them to be found in John's narrative. It would seem to be characteristic of John to observe a severe parsimony in the matter of miracle and to insist, when he does present one, upon interpreting it and driving home the spiritual principle or truth which it symbolizes (*e.g.*, Joh. vi). There are not more than seven miracle narratives, as usually counted, in John's entire Gospel, and with the possible exception of the Walking on the Sea (note the comments on that passage), it is obvious that for John the miracle is but the vestibule in which the reader is not expected to linger, but to pass on into the inner shrine. Here is further confirmation of how John's intensively practical bent of mind and his convert-making task combine to persuade him to refuse to rest his case either on the distant in space or the historical or the apocalyptic in time. His preference, instead, is to point to his own Church members as living miracles through the gift of eternal life conferred upon them by Jesus during his second, unended and unending stay in the power of the Spirit among men. And we have the best of pagan testimony that these first-century Christians did not put the Christian preacher to shame who held them up to inquirers as

the best evidence of the change from ordinary existence wrought in men by the gift of Eternal life.

THE TRIAL OF JESUS

JOHN XVIII, 12—XIX, 16

xviii, 13. And they brought him first to Annas. For he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest.

15. Now Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. That disciple was acquainted with the high priest and so entered in with Jesus, 16. while Peter stood outside by the door. 19. The high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. 20. Jesus answered, I have spoken openly to the world. 21. Ask those who have heard. 22. When he said this, one of the deputies struck Jesus and said, Is that the way you speak to the high priest? 23. Jesus answered, If I have said anything wrong, give evidence about it; but if not, why do you strike me? 24. Annas then sent him still bound to Caiaphas, the high priest.

26. One of the slaves, a relative of the one whose ear Peter had cut off, says, Did I not see you with him in the garden? 27. Peter again denied it; and at that minute a cock crowed.

28. Then they bring Jesus from Caiaphas to the Roman palace; but they themselves did not enter. 33. Pilate called Jesus and said, Are you the king of the Jews? 36. Jesus answered, My kingdom is not a kingdom of this world. 37. Pilate said, Then you are a king? Jesus answered, It is as you say. The purpose for which I was born, for which I came into the world was to bear testimony to the truth. 38. Pilate says to him, What is truth? And he went outside to the Jews, and says to them, I find nothing with which he can be charged.

xix, 1. Then Pilate took Jesus and had him scourged. 5. Then Jesus came outside wearing the crown of thorns

and the purple robe. And Pilate says to them, Here is the Man. 12. Pilate was anxious to release him, but the Jews cried out. 14. Pilate says to the Jews, Here is your King. 15. Then they cried out, Away with him! Crucify him! 16. Then he delivered Jesus to them to be crucified.

The examination before Annas is one of John's contributions to the history of the last hours. It is not mentioned in the other gospels. As no other motive or reason is apparent for its insertion, it is to be taken as a bit of genuine history which supplements the synoptic narrative. The situation thus created has its difficulties but they only enhance its general historical probability. Jesus was led to Annas first because Annas "was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest." It is not easy to see the point in this. But perhaps that fact is in favor of its accuracy. Annas was high priest from 6 to 15 A.D. Caiaphas was high priest from 18 A.D. until 36. Sons of Annas held the office before and after Caiaphas. Annas seems to have been a sort of consultant expert to whom the reigning high priest through all these years turned when he had a particularly difficult problem to solve. (*Cf.*, especially Luk. iii, 2; also Acts iv, 6.) John does not give Annas the title high priest until verse 15; he repeats this title in 19; then in 24 he says Annas sent him to "Caiaphas, the high priest."

"Peter followed Jesus and so did another disciple" (15). One other disciple is singled out and here linked with Peter in much the same way as the Beloved Disciple is associated with him in xx, 2 ff. Somewhat the same situation seems to have existed in the conversation at the table, xiii, 23, 24; similarly also in xxi, 20. It is not unlikely, therefore, that the disciple referred to in all these instances is the same—the Beloved Disciple. "That disciple was acquainted with the high priest." It is exceedingly improbable that this could be the Galilean fisherman,

John, the son of Zebedee, for the likelihood that he had ever formed the acquaintance of the high priest is negligible. But the statement becomes very natural and easy of credence if the other disciple referred to is the Ephesian writer of the Fourth Gospel who had once been a resident of Jerusalem.

"Peter denied again; and at that minute a cock crowed" (27). Peter's threefold denial of Jesus was never forgotten by early Christians. As stated before, the entire account of the assembling of the Sanhedrin, the calling of witnesses and the whole procedure before that body, is assumed and never referred to by John. But Peter's denial, which took place during the same trial, according to Mark, is referred to and included. There are two reasons for this exception. In the first place, the author is interested in pointing out another instance of a prediction of Jesus fulfilled (*Cf.*, xviii, 3). In the second place, it is to be noted that a good deal is made of the denial and the tale of it told at some length. This Gospel does not picture Peter as the perfect or principal Apostle. It does not even mention that Peter, after his three denials, went out and wept bitterly (Mar. xiv, 72; Mat., xxvi, 75; Luk. xxii, 62).

Attention to the dignity and majesty exhibited by Jesus in his last hours is further called at various points throughout the trial. In verse 20, instead of answering the question of Annas, Jesus states that his teaching is publicly known. "Why do you ask me? Ask those who have heard me" (21). For the fancied lack of respect in this answer he was struck by an officer. Pilate himself is impressed and by no means puts his question in a tone of mockery, "What is truth?" (38).

Another interesting characteristic of the narrative is the emphasized way in which it fixes the responsibility for the death and crucifixion of Jesus on the Jews. He makes use of Pilate's hesitancy in crucifying Jesus (*Cf.*, Mar. xv, 14, 15), to throw the blame as far as possible upon the

Jews. Pilate, it is made to appear, treats Jesus almost with respect as he questions him. After an examination of him, Pilate reports to the Jews waiting outside: "I find no basis for an indictment" (38). Then he makes the direct request that in fulfilling the Passover custom of releasing a captive he may have their consent to free Jesus. There is little or no doubt that we are meant to understand that his motive in the scourging (xix, 1) was to appease the Jews so that they would relent and not demand the extreme penalty. Again, Pilate pleads in xix, 4, as in xviii, 38, "I find no grounds for a charge against him." In xix, 5, is the famous *Ecce Homo,* "Behold, the Man!" found only in John. Pilate's motive in thus centering all eyes on "the man" was to arouse the Jews to mercy at the pitiable sight. But this appeal also failed. Still again in xix, 12, we read that once more Pilate sought to release him after a later examination, "but the Jews cried out."

According to the Fourth Gospel, therefore, the entire responsibility for Jesus' death lay with the Jewish leaders. This seems also a safe and sane historical judgment; for the unlikelihood is extreme that the Romans would be alarmed by such a peace-loving leader as Jesus. The "scribes and Pharisees," on the other hand, would be likely to carry their purpose to remove him from their path to the bitter death because of the fundamental conflict between Jesus' teaching and their ceremonial and priestly religion.

THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS

JOHN XIX, 26—XX, 29

xix, 26. Jesus, seeing his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing near, says to his mother, There is your son! 27. Then he says to the disciple, There is your mother! And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

28. After this, Jesus, knowing that everything was

now finished, says, I am thirsty. 30. When Jesus had received the wine he said, It is finished; and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

35. And he who has seen it testifies to it, and his statement is a true one; and he knows that he is speaking the truth, so that you also may believe.

xx, 1. On the first day of the week Mary Magdelene comes to the tomb very early while it is still dark, and sees the stone taken away from the tomb. 2. She runs, and comes to Simon Peter and to that other disciple whom Jesus loved, and says to them, They have taken away the Master out of the tomb! 4. And the other disciple ran faster than Peter, and came to the tomb first. 6. Simon Peter arrives soon after him, and he went into the tomb. 8. Then the other disciple went inside also, and he saw and believed. 10. Then the disciples went away again.

11. But Mary was standing outside the tomb, weeping. While she was weeping, she bent over and looked into the tomb. 12. And she perceives two angels in white. 14. She turned away and perceives Jesus standing there. 16. Jesus says to her, Mary. She turns and says to him, Rabboni. 17. Jesus says, Hold me not; for I have not yet ascended to the Father: but go to my brethren and say, I am going up to my Father.

19. In the evening of the same day, and while the doors were shut where the disciples were, Jesus came in and stood among them. And he says to them, Peace be with you. 22. And he breathed on them, and says to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.

26. And a week later the disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Jesus comes, and he said, Peace be with you. 27. Then he says to Thomas, Put your finger here, and look at my hands; and be not an unbeliever, but a believer. 28. Thomas answered, My Master and my God. 29. Jesus says to him, Is it because

you have seen that you have believed? Blessed are those who have not seen, and yet have believed.

The scene in which Jesus beholds his mother from the cross introduces us for the second time to the "disciple whom Jesus loved" (*Cf.*, xiii, 23; note also xviii, 15). That mother lived in Nazareth and thus had no home in Jerusalem. If our identification of the Beloved Disciple is correct, his home, however, was not far away and he would naturally feel a pride in recounting this striking proof that Jesus gave as to the closeness of their friendship even long years afterward. It is interesting to note that Westcott and other commentators who hold that the Beloved Disciple was the John of Galilee, who was one of the Twelve, feel it necessary to explain in one way or another that "it does not follow that St. John's 'home' was at Jerusalem." Other things being equal, the simpler meaning of the words is to be preferred, *i.e.*, that the beloved disciple did live in Jerusalem and that the word "hour" is to be understood in a literal or nearly literal sense. "And from that hour the disciple took her into his home."

It is easy to dismiss the problem of the identity of this disciple by saying that he is evidently an imaginary figure. The same could be said with equal arbitrariness regarding any other figure in the Gospel. Nicodemus may be an imaginary character. The nameless woman at the well, also, may be one. To be sure, Bacon is not alone in holding that if Jesus could truthfully be said ever to have had this real "beloved disciple," he would be one of the Twelve and Peter that one. Both this resort to an imaginary Beloved Disciple and the arguments in its behalf, however, are a by-product of the assumption that this Fourth Gospel could not have been written by a personal disciple of Jesus. (See the earlier chapters on authorship, and the popular quality of the Gospel.)

"Everything was now finished" (28). That this is a

statement of the first importance is shown by the repetition in verse 30, "It is finished," and by such anticipatory phrases as that of having "completed the work which thou hast given me to do" (xvii, 4). In John's conception of Jesus his death was a mere hyphen, a short gap between his first stay with men in the flesh and his second stay with them in the power of the Spirit. His life before and after were the all-important facts. Not his Going but his Coming, both the first and the second times; not his leaving the flesh but his taking it, were the immensely significant things.

John's attitude stands in open contrast to that of Paul. With Paul the death and resurrection were all-important. For John, the Jesus who stayed with men in the flesh is the same Jesus that he was before and has been since; he does not change. Not his single Going but his Comings, both the First and the Second, constitute the last word of proof of God's love for the world of men. For Paul, on the other hand, the Jesus who stayed with men in the flesh is not the same Jesus that he has been since; his death and resurrection wrought a change in him and conferred power and status upon him thereafter immeasurably superior to that which he displayed in the days of his flesh.

It is difficult to understand verse 35 as anything else than a claim on the part of the author to have been present at the death of Jesus. The words are strikingly parallel with those of I John i, 1, 3, "That which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld and our hands handled . . . that which we have seen and heard declare we to you." Both passages have been accounted for as instances of the realism ascribed by its devotee to mystical experience and knowledge. But some such explanation as this is forced upon those who accept too late a dating of the writings for them to be the words of an eye-witness. To one who believes that the Gospel was written by the Beloved Disciple, the words are but the natural language of

one who vouches for the truth of the account which he has given of Jesus Christ, whom God did send.

The "disciple whom Jesus loved" (xx, 2) appears again in the story of the resurrection. This time the word for "loved" is a different one, but the reference is the same. Bacon and others point out that, as in xiii 23, this disciple takes precedence over Peter here again. It is stated in xx, 1-10, that the Beloved Disciple was able to run the faster of the two, which, as we remarked before, coincides again with our view that the Beloved Disciple was a lad of Jerusalem, who would naturally be more agile than the older Peter. His hesitancy in entering the tomb first would accord again with his youth. The fact that he did enter when Peter arrived is discordant with the view held by some that the "ideal" disciple was a representative of those who would believe without seeing (*Cf.*, xx, 29).

The abrupt return of the narrative to the tomb after departing with Peter and the other disciple at xx, 11, seems to many an example of the kind of thing which goes to show that in its present form this Gospel is not entirely the work of a single hand. All through the Gospel are various evidences of the work of an editor. Probably John himself inserted links of connection to bind together somewhat less loosely the independent units of which it is made. Almost certainly the Gospel was later revised also by the editor who wrote chapter xxi. (See our discussion on the Authorship of the Gospel.) Most scholars hold that it betrays evidence of the use by the author also of written sources. That he did make some use of them is quite certain in case he had not been in Jerusalem personally at the time of Jesus' death. But the view for which we have contended in our chapter on the Popular Quality of the Gospel is that where he gives us independent material John's sources aside from his own knowledge were for the most part not written but popular sources. In other words, John, instead of having in his possession an early manuscript of considerable extent, simply took those narratives

of Jesus' life which had stood the test of popular approval and were current coin, and made his selection from them. This might be called a democratic view of the problem of authorship and sources.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find two narratives as independent as xx, 2-10, and xx, 11-18. For example, Mary, although alone at the time of verse 11 as she was in verse 1, yet in 2-10 speaks as though others were with her (*Cf.*, Mar. xvi, 1). Verse 2 and verse 13 might be called evidence of the existence of duplicate versions of the same incident, the difference being that in verse 2 Mary says "we" while in verse 13 she uses "I." Verse 2 reads: "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we know not where they have laid him." Verse 13 reads: "They have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid him." It has also been pointed out that the statement that Mary runs to tell the disciples is thus repeated. Verse 2 reads: "She runs and comes to Peter and the other disciple . . . and says." Verse 18 reads: "She comes and tells the disciples." Other indications that we have here two independent narratives are well given by Garvie (p. 183), although Garvie himself is not convinced that they are decisive. Many other apparent doubles have been noted, as for example in the narrative that they "took away the body of Jesus" for burial (xix, 38; *cf.*, xix, 40).

All such detailed study of John's Gospel serves to show the more clearly its popular, flexible, democratic quality. John took the material at his disposal and under his large and free handling, it became molded into the most spiritual and best loved book of the ages.

Certain particulars of its resurrection narrative are peculiar to this Gospel. John does not record the Ascension of Jesus. This is in line with his emphasis upon Jesus' life rather than upon his death, or things closely connected with it, upon his first stay with his disciples in the flesh, and

his second stay in the power of the Spirit with his later disciples who "have not seen and yet have believed." John closes his Gospel not with the Ascension but with a picture of closest sympathetic intimacy to the very end between Jesus and his Galilean disciples, including even the doubter.

Another particular peculiar to the Fourth Gospel is the time and place at which it states the first giving of the Holy Spirit occurred. Luke records the descent of the Holy Spirit as taking place on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii, 1-4; *cf.* esp. Acts i, 5, 8). John, it will be remembered (see comments on John xiv) makes the Holy Spirit the object of Jesus' going and the return of Jesus always means to him the coming of the Spirit, for to him the object of Jesus' return and second stay with his later disciples was to confer this gift of the Spirit upon them. Hence we are not surprised to read in this particular Gospel that at Jesus' reappearance to his Galilean disciples "he breathed on them, and says to them, Receive the Holy Spirit" (22). The Holy Spirit came later, Acts ii, 4 appears to say and quite apart from the personal presence of Jesus. Jesus "parted from" his disciples (Luk. xxiv, 51), but John is not interested in the parting, which was only for a little while, so much as he is in his return, which would be soon; thereafter to be with them continually and continuously.

John's whole account of the resurrection is marked by a high degree of spiritual reserve. Although Thomas receives the invitation to touch Jesus there is no direct statement that he did so. In fact Jesus does not say, Reach out and put your finger on the spot, but, Reach out your finger and see. He looks upon the resurrection from a lofty religious plane. What he sees and how he sees it presents a deep contrast with the more physical or circumstantial narratives in the appendix (chapter xxi) or in Luke or even in Matthew. The discovery of the empty

tomb, the question as to where the body has been taken, Mary's vision, the appearance to the Twelve, the breathing of the Holy Spirit, are the successive steps, quickly taken, by which John lifts his audience from physical to more and more spiritual conceptions; and thus prepares the way for his triumphant appeal to his Ephesian listeners: "Blessed are those who have not seen, and yet have believed" (xx, 29). The tremendous special meaning of the word "believe" in this Gospel has been explained in our comments on John xv.

THE PURPOSE OF THE GOSPEL

JOHN XX, 30, 31

> xx, 30. There are many other signs which Jesus showed which are not written in this book; 31. these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that through believing you may have Life by his power.

These words form the original conclusion of the Gospel. Chapter xxi was added after the death of the author (xxi, 23) to obtain a wider acceptance for the Gospel (a) by giving recognition to the growing preëminence of Peter, (b) by including one story of an appearance of Jesus in Galilee (*Cf.*, Mat. xxviii, 16), and finally (c) by indicating more plainly the identity of the author of the Gospel. (See chapter on authorship.) John's own conclusion to his Gospel (xx, 30, 31) characterizes it as a collection of "signs" selected out of Jesus' ministry in Judea and in Galilee. These signs are explained by John as having significance not only with regard to Jesus' divine mission during his first stay in the flesh with his earliest disciples, but also with regard to his continued spiritual work during his second stay in the power of the Spirit among his later disciples. John thus gave to Jesus' life a universal and eternal meaning. But he employed no abstract method in doing it. He portrayed a flesh and blood Jesus, but in

such fashion that each act selected by him became an example and a sign under the wizardry of his interpretative skill. He internationalized and universalized Jesus by extracting from his deeds spiritual significance and power of the highest potential.

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Books have been mentioned in the present volume usually by author only. Where two books by the same author are listed here, reference has been to the first title, unless otherwise stated.

COMMENTARIES ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

B. F. WESTCOTT, *St. John's Gospel;* a volume of *The Bible Commentary,* New York, Scribner's. Originally published in 1882.

Westcott's commentary is scholarly, but makes little use of historical, critical research.

B. F. WESTCOTT, *Commentary on the Gospel of St. John. The Greek Text with Introduction and Notes,* London, Murray, 1908.

This posthumous revised edition is based upon the Greek Text, but does not differ greatly in point of view from the volume of the Bible Commentary.

F. GODET, *Commentary on the Gospel of St. John,* New York, Funk and Wagnalls; French original published in 1864.

Godet's exposition is not critical, but his comments are often brilliant and religiously valuable.

MARCUS DODS, *The Gospel of St. John. Expositor's Greek Testament,* Hodder and Stoughton, 1897.

Thoroughly conservative. Homiletically useful.

J. A. MCCLYMONT, Volume on *St. John* in the *Century Bible,* Frowde, 1901.

A brief pocket commentary, conservative and uncritical.

E. J. GOODSPEED, *The Gospel of John,* American Institute of Sacred Literature, University of Chicago, 1917. 43 pages.

A syllabus with assignments and questions, for use in a Bible study class. Thoroughly modern, critical and scholarly.

In German there are the critical commentaries of H. J. Holtzmann and of W. Heitmüller, the radical work of J. Wellhausen, the conservative commentary of B. Weiss, the large orthodox volume of T. Zahn, and the brief modern popular one of W. Bauer.

In French there is the critical commentary of A. Loisy, Le Quatrième Évangile, 1903, 2d ed., 1921.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GOSPEL

An attempt has been made to arrange these titles in the order of their practical usefulness in connection with study of the present volume. But some readers will prefer one book, some another. All those listed are well written, and there are many others as well not mentioned here.

E. F. SCOTT, *The Fourth Gospel, Its Purpose and Theology,* Edinburgh, 1906; Scribner, 1908.

A detailed exposition of the theology of the Gospel.

E. F. SCOTT, *The Historical and Religious Value of the Fourth Gospel,* Houghton, 1909. Now published by the Pilgrim Press.

A thoroughly modern introduction in very brief compass. (Price about 40c.)

PERCY GARDNER, *The Ephesian Gospel,* Crown Theological Library, New York, Putnam, 1915.

A sketch of the main features of the Gospel and its Ephesian environment.

B. W. BACON, *The Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate,* Moffatt, 1910.

A comprehensive, critical discussion of questions concerning authorship.

James Moffatt, *An Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament.* Scribner, 1911 (pp. 515 to 619).
An excellent, condensed review of the problems and the literature bearing upon them.

V. H. Stanton, *The Gospels as Historical Documents, Part III. The Fourth Gospel,* Cambridge, 1920.
Defends the general historical accuracy of the Gospel, but does not claim for it direct, apostolic authorship.

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A small volume discussing problems of authorship. Contains a good presentation of all material bearing upon the distinction between the Beloved Disciple and the Son of Zebedee.

A. E. Garvie, *The Beloved Disciple,* London, Hodder; New York, Doran, 1922.
Recent, scholarly, conservative. Distinguishes three authors in the Gospel: The Witness, the Evangelist, the Redactor. The Miracle at Cana and the Raising of Lazarus are among the narratives of the Witness.

C. F. Burney, *The Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel,* Oxford, 1922.
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F. C. Burkitt, *The Gospel History and Its Transmission,* 2d ed., Scribner, 1907.
Burkitt holds the Fourth Gospel was written by the Beloved Disciple, not the Apostle.

E. J. Goodspeed, *The Story of the New Testament,* University of Chicago Press, 1916 (pp. 114 to 124).
An unusually vivid introduction not a dozen pages in length.

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Internal evidence of the Gospel regarding author and editor.

A. Nairne, *Johannine Writings,* London, 1918.

R. H. STRACHAN, *The Fourth Gospel, Its Significance and Environment,* London, Student Christian Movement, 1917.

Nairne and Strachan give able presentations of Johannine Teaching.

P. W. SCHMIEDEL, *The Johannine Writings,* Macmillan, 1908.

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W. SANDAY, *The Criticism of the Fourth Gospel,* Scribner, 1905.

J. DRUMMOND, *An Inquiry into the Character and Authorship of the Fourth Gospel,* Scribner, 1904.

H. H. WENDT, *The Gospel According to St. John: An Inquiry into Its Genesis and Historical Value,* Scribner, 1902.

Sanday and Drummond maintain direct apostolic authorship and historical accuracy and order. Wendt does the same in a modified way.

German publications on the Gospel are too numerous to be listed here. See Moffatt, pp. 515-519. That German interest is still active is evidenced by the recent volume, *Untersuchungen über die Entstehung des vierten Evangeliums,* Bd. ii. Von Julius v. Grill, Tübingen, 1923. Professor Grill is almost too thoroughgoing in relating John's Gospel to the Hellenistic mystery religions.

In French there is the work of A. Loisy, *Les Mystères paiens et le Mystère Chrétien,* Paris, 1919.

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F. Cumont, *Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism,* Chicago, 1911.

C. Clemen, *Primitive Christianity and Its Non-Jewish Sources,* Edinburgh, 1912.

H. A. A. Kennedy, *St. Paul and the Mystery Religions,* London, Hodder, 1913.

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J. Hastings, *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels,* 2 vols., Scribner, 1906-1908.

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